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# Czechoslovak

# Music

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zechoslovak music certainly contributed pure gold to the World's Treasury of Art. There were the 18th century masters who living abroad gave all their home inspiration to international music. The 19th and the 20th centuries were the Golden Age for Czech music inside the country, but its fame spread all over the world. Bedřich Smetana, Antonín Dvořák, Leoš Janáček are names that every lover of music knows. Their purely national inspiration introduced the Czech element to the world of all music loving peoples. In this way they have become cosmopolitan in the purest sense of the word. Even contemporary music in Czechoslovakia has the most ideal condition of development springing out of age long tradition and natural gift for music. If classical composition has won favour in the international field of contest we hope that the modern creation will not disappoint the friends of Czech music. The following chapters should inform the reader, within the limited possibility of this book, on Czech music and its tradition.

#### EARLY CZECH MUSIC

#### VLADIMÍR HELFERT

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If we are to mention the most characteristic traits of the Czechoslovak peoples the first place will fall to their intense musical feeling—their natural gift for music. The history of music in Bohemia and Moravia brings enough documents to this point. It is a symptom of the indominable strength which manifests itself in all ages and under whatever circumstances. There were whole epochs when the creative drive of the nation could show itself solely in music. In the times of political oppression-and those were many-the nation found the outlet for its feelings, its power and strength, its claim to life, only in and through its music. The literature of the 17th and 18th centuries was most resolutely suppressed, but music with its international coat could carry on the living spirit of the nation. For this reason mainly it is of highest and most extraordinary importance for the development of Czech culture. It is not only supplementing a fully developed national culture as it is the case of other nations—it is a symbol of life—a great political power through which this nation could claim its right to the place in the sun and claim it very distinctly.

The beginnings and the development of Czech music have gone through the same stages as the music and culture of other nations. It is the union between the creative power of the national spirit and the fecundating influence of other nations.

At the beginning of the Middle Ages it was a strong By-

zantine influence of the Great Moravian Kingdom (830—906). The latest research of this period has proved a more marked influence of the Byzantine culture, than we had anticipated, and we can reasonably conclude that music was not exempt from this influence, especially when we realize the high standard of Byzantine music in the country of its origin. The literary research has proved that the text of the oldest Czech spiritual hymn "Hospodine, pomiluj ny" (Our Lord Have Mercy upon Us) is formed according the rules of Slavonic Liturgy. The origin of this song is then definitely set before the beginning of the 11th century when the influence of the Byzantine Church was succeeded by that of the Church of Rome. If it also applies to the tune we cannot say as yet. No other testimony of that era has been preserved, and we have to be satisfied with this very general proposition of its possibilities.

The second influence to determine the character of Czech music was that of the Western culture brought into the country by the Church of Rome after the fall of the Great Moravian Kingdom. The endeavour to standardize the liturgy and its musical exponents has definitely turned the Czech musical creation to the West, its influence always marked by the changing intermediary—German, French or Italian.

All national, social, and especially religious movements were an unusually strong impulse to the national musicality of the people, and the happy union between these natural gifts and the Western influence resulted in individual creation.

The music of Western Europe up to the end of the 16th century may be divided into two main periods: 1st being entirely governed by the monodic principle; 2<sup>nd</sup> began to realize polymelodic principle especially the vocal polymelody.

Our question stands: what was the influence of these two principles upon the musical creative power of the Czech people, and did this people bring anything of their own into European music?

The monodic principle enabled only the creation of people's hymns sung at religious services and later of artificial secular songs. The basis of either is the liturgical style, that, is the Gregorian chant in all its forms. This was introduced to Bohemia at a very early date. Unison singing—that is the Gregorian choral—found its great possibilities in monasteries. Since 973—the date of establishing the new episcopate with the seat of the bishop in Prague, it is there that this art centres. All forms of the choral are introduced: sequentia, tropi, hymns, and even plays. They reach their height in the 13th and 14th centuries. Considering the uniformity of the Roman church it was rather difficult to introduce any individuality into its music and the general tone of the whole is the same as in other countries of Western Europe.

Such were the conditions of music and from these grew the independent monodic spiritual hymn and choral of the Czech people. Its limits lie within the possibilities of the melody represented by the Gregorian choral. The fundamental and absolute religious faith, the living spirit of Christianity with its social influence was the spiritual impulse and the melody of the Gregorian choral the inspiration. The most important songs of this period are: Svatý Václave (a hymn invoking St. Venceslas Patron Saint of the country) from the 2nd half of the 13th century; Jezu Kriste, štědrý kněže (Jesus Christ, Our Generous Lord) from the 1st half of the 14th century; Buoh všemohúcí (God Almighty) from the very beginning of the 14th century. There is no complicated melody in these songs as we find it in

France at that time, but their very simplicity and melodious earnestness exactly corresponds to the intensity of religious feeling out of which these songs have sprung.

Since that time religious songs have become the most important and to a degree the only representative of independent composition. It is very interesting to note that the monodic principle is kept up long after the music of Western Europe has generally adopted the polymelodic principle. Even in the time of highest renaissance the culmination of musical endeavour is represented by religious folk songs. It is the first half of the 15th century, the time of John Huss and his followers the Hussites. In other parts of Europe music has gone through the so called Ars Nova style, and the polyfonic style slowly penetrates outside the Netherlands. The great religious movement represented by the Hussites could not leave the field of music untouched. Seething with religious and spiritual emotion it has found the outlet in songs-songs of such greatness that their influence is felt all over the neighbouring territories. These songs being folk songs at heart are simple as their authors were simple people, but they are full of melodious strength as the whole movement was full of strength. They have a definite form which has grown out of the tradition of Czech religious music. One of them "Kdož jsú Boží bojovníci" (Ye Soldiers of God's Law) has acquired a most important place in the political history of the Czech people and has been a great inspiration to many composers of later years.

The influence of these Hussite hymns is strongly felt in the Lutheran chorals of Germany. In Czech music they reach down through all the centuries from the 15th till the 18th. Again and again their unusual melodious richness inspires the chorals and hymns of the Moravian Brethren Hymnals and even the Herrn-

hut Hymnals of the 18th century. Religious folk singing of all nations in Europe is marked by the national characteristics of the different peoples. Next to French, Italian, and German religious folk songs the Czech type stands definitely apart with its national and individual colouring.

In contrast to other countries in Europe the Czech secular music is represented only at the end of the 14th century by the name Magister Záviš. His music even if marked by a personal melodious originality is rather poor in comparison with other music of the kind of "lays". In the Czech sphere of artificial secular song there is nothing which would be of any importance either for its quality or quantity. While Italy and France have a large number of composers the Czech music of the 14th century remains conservative in its style and subject, true to religious folk singing, enriching it in its melody and inspiration, but not in its method.

It was a vital necessity for Czech music to set itself free of this monodic bondage if it was to follow the swiftly changing conditions of living and art. The 15th and the 16th centuries brought new principles of style. Inspired by vocal polyphony the principle of polymelody reached its height in the Netherlands.

The Hussite movement, though of extreme importance for the formation of Czech music, has prevented contact with contemporary music of other nations of Europe. The polymelodic system comes to Bohemia only towards the end of the 15th century. Politically it is the time of consolidation and reconstruction in the reign of George of Podiebrad (1458—71). The reign of this excellent sovereign and even that of the first Habsburgs open the entrance to new influence. A new contact with the Netherlands brought new music. Musical organisa-

tions were formed and these units usually connected with some church but composed of secular members endeavoured to uphold the old musical tradition of church singing within the principles of the new style. Wonderful hymnals written in hand in the 15th and 16th centuries are an excellent proof of their high standards. Besides these more or less religious organisations there were private orchestras. The best known was of course that of Ferdinand I (1526—64) and Maximilian II (1564—76) in Prague but there were very many good ones organized by high aristocrats of the country, e. g. the Rožmberk Orchestra in Český Krumlov. In the reign of Rudolf II (1575—1612) Prague was the centre of European musical life. It also became the home of many masters of the polyphonic style like: Phillip de Monte, Charles Luyton, Jac. Regnard, Jac. Gallus and others.

These unusually propitious external conditions could not leave Czech music untouched. The natural reaction to this foreign influence were several composers accepting the polymelodic style. These were mainly Jan Trojan Turnovský, Jiří Rychnovský, and Christoph Harant of Polžice.

### THE COURT OF RUDOLF II: 1575—1612 HIS MAJESTY'S MUSICIANS

VLADIMÍR HELFERT

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The time of Rudolf II corresponds in music to that of renaissance in literature. It is the time of the highest popularity of the melodic style. It were the great masters of this art who coming from the Netherlands in the 15th and 16th centuries had become leading personalities in the musical endeavour of all European countries. People like Obrecht, Josquino, Orlando di Lasso and others changed the monodic conception of music bringing the polyphonic complicated means. This style demanding a great versatility of reproduction depended more or less from trained orchestras capable of rendering the polyphonic composition. These orchestras, in their turn, depended from a patron who would take care of their material problems. Sovereigns, rich aristocrats, monasteries and churches were the only refuge of this artistic endeavour. Without these orchestras and choirs no such development of the polymelodic style could have been reached.

Among the first of these musical centres was the court of Rudolf II. His musicians were analogous to his artistic collections, they were chosen with the same care. His orchestra or band was built on the tradition founded by Ferdinand II and Maximilian II. It is not important for the number of its members but for their quality. The leader since 1568 had been Philipp de Monte, an outstanding composer, Lorn in the Netherlands. His pupil Orlando di Lasso wrote many polyphonic masses, motets and French "chansons". The organist was Carolus

Luyton (1620) who by his compositions prepared the entrance of the baroque style into music. Among other artists who came to this country from the Netherlands the names of Lambertus de Sayve (d. 1614), Wilh. Formelis (d. 1582), Pawel de Winde (d. 1596) must not be forgotten. French music was represented by Jacques Regnard (d. 1599), an outstanding master of French polymelodic style, and by his countryman Jean de Castro. Germany sent to the Court of Rudolf II an important representative of German polymelody Hans Leov Hasler (d. 1612).

These outstanding names ensured the high standard of Rudolf's Court Band. That Prague was the centre of musical endeavour even outside the Court circles may be seen from the fact that Jacobus Gallus (d. 1591) one of the most sovereign masters of the polymelodic style became organist at St. John's Church. In this way Prague drew to her churches and aristocratic homes the best musicians of that time. We must admit, however, that Prague and the whole country accepted more from her artistic visitors than she gave to them herself. Czech musicians profitted from this outside contact and the works of Christoph Harant of Polžice (d. 1621) were inspired with the same ideas and worked out in the same style as the compositions of his foreign colleagues. Unfortunately the time of glory for Prague as the seat of the Court with its cultural advantage was very short. When Mathias succeeded Rudolf on the Czech throne (1612) he moved his Court to Vienna and the changed political conditions brought about a change in the life of Prague. It was only as late as the 2nd half of the 17th century that the Czech creative drive found its outlet in new and independent composition. The intelectual and style conditions, of course, were quite different from those of the polymelodic Golden Age in Rudolf II's reign.

#### CZECH MUSIC OF THE 18th CENTURY

#### VLADIMÍR HELFERT

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The 18th century is the time of two styles in all Europe: the baroque style which reaches its summit in the first half of that century to be followed by classicism—the counterpart of rationalism in literature and science. Either of these two styles has its own means of expression and construction. It must be mentioned that some forms, usually connected with classicism, take their origin from the end of the 17th and the first half of the 18th century. In the works of Alessandro Scarlatti, Leonardo Leo, Pergolesi, Reinh. Keiser, even in those of J. S. Bach and Händel the early classical melodics are found. It is the work of musical historiography to trace all these little sources springing up at the beginning of the 18th century from which a majestic stream of musical classicism arose. The same is true about plastic arts and philosophy where the roots of rationalism may be traced as far as the end of the 17th century. So in the first half of the 18th century all over Europe a quite disorganized tendency of musical preclassicism may be seen, and it was the question of further development to change it into a firmly organized style. It must not be forgotten that the highest tribute goes to French and Italian music. Their melodiousness, tunefullness, their disregard for schematism, their vivid and animated nature, the sure way in seeking and finding new form, made these two nations unusually apt to form a new style especially that of classicism. The Italian opera of the first part of the 18th century mainly the opera buffa was an exceptionally rich soil for the growth and crystalization of a new melodic classical style. But also Italian baroque church music gave many an impulse to the same. Differing from the Protestant church music (J. S. Bach) which remains bound by the service itself the Italian baroque church music reminds of the ornamental architecture of those times. Very often the baroque church becomes merely a concert hall. It is not bound by a service and a musical performance which would shock a strict Protestant congregation becomes an artistic propaganda for church interests. If Italian music was a source of the baroque melody, French music contributed much in the field of musical drama and musical esthetics. Without the French "tragédie lyrique" we would not have Gluck's classical operas.

What was the part of Czech music in those times: The outside conditions were highly unfavourable. As the result of the White Mountain Catastrophy which ended the Thirty Years' War Czech independence was lost and the political conditions most oppresive. It is remarkable that, in these hard times, Czech music had strength enough to influence European culture. The importance of the Czech contribution to the 18th century music was the forming of a preaclassical musical style. There were two main forces forming it: one at home in Bohemia and the other abroad through the works of Czech emigrants.

Bohemia in the 18th century was a reservoir of musicality. The Czech mind and soul, entirely oppressed by political conditions, found the means for free expression in music. Very early there were some traits which later on formed the typical Czech preclassicism. The first to bring these was the founder of the Prague Organ School Bohuslav Černohorský (1684—1742).

Very few of his compositions were preserved, but, even if they cannot be compared to J. S. Bach or to J. J. Fuchs as far as polyphonic complication is concerned, they bring an individual melodic inspiration and a colourful harmony. In his fugas parts may be found which resound with folklore melodics. This melodious and harmonious spontaneousness was the main Czech contribution to European classicism of the second half of the 18th century. It is interesting to note that this characteristic trait may be noticed even in the baroque style, and it is exactly this trait which differs from the tragical pathos of it by its spontaneousness and its clarity. This quality of Černohorsky's compositions springs from two sources: the first is the general musicality of the Czechs, and the second Italian music from the first part of the 18th century. The Czech musicality is a natural gift of the nation and has nothing to do with intellectual creation. Let us only quote Charles Burney who in his book "The Present State of Music in Germany" wrote something like this: I have often heard that the Czechs are most musically gifted people of all Europe; and a German composer now living in London (1772) has told me the Czechs would surpass the Italians, if they had the same advantage as the latter. I have travelled all over the kingdom of Bohemia and I have asked everywhere how the simple people are taught music. So I have finally learned that children of either sex are taught music not only in big towns, but in every village where reading and writing is taught." As far as the second inspiration of Černohorský and his pupils is concerned, we may say that since the 17th century Italian music has been performed in all Czech and Moravian church choirs and country seats of aristocracy. From these two sources then springs musical preclassicism in Bohemia.

Among the outstanding representatives we must remember František X. Brixi, the musical director of the St. Vitus Cathedral in Prague. He was born in the same year as Joseph Haydn (1732) and died in 1771. Mozart was 15 years old then. He belongs among the most diligent composers of his time having written: 105 masses, 263 offertoria, motets, and hymns, 5 requiems, over 440 works for church music in general. Even if the construction of his compositions is very simple, it brings about a spontaneous and melodious character, a new rythm, and a clear harmony. Gone is the serious monumentality of the baroque style. In this way he is an immediate precursor of Havdn and Mozart. Another three composers living in Prague at that time were Jan Lohelius Oelschlägel (1724-88), musical director in the Premonstrate Monastery Strahov, Peregrinus Gravani, for a time organist at St. James's in Brno, and a very interesting and not yet fully appreciated composer, Amandus Ivanschitz. All of these, Brixi included, were simple people born and educated in Czech or Moravian countryside. And this humble origin combined with the natural gift of song given to all Czech people were the main source of this spontaneous and melodic music which was a preparatory stage to classicism.

The fact that the baroque style was slowly changed into classicism in the church choirs of Bohemia and Moravia is very important for the study of social conditions of those times. We must remember that after the death of Rudolf II (1612) Prague no longer was the seat of the sovereign. Considering that baroque culture was more or less dependent from rich patrons, this change of the sovereign's seat meant impoverishment for Prague, not only from the economic, but also the cultural point of view. Music had to take refuge in church choirs and aristocratic homes. Church music played a socially

most important role since it came into contact with all classes of the people. As the compositions of F. X. Brixi and his followers were popular all over Bohemia and Moravia, their preclassical style changed the musical conception of all country.

In this connection Mozart's success in Prague is seen in a different light. The country, prepared by Brixi's preclassicism, welcomed in Mozart an art not foreign in its style, but an art that was the culmination of the country's own endeavour. In this way we can understand that Prague accepted Mozart at once, loved his art, and formed one large body of Mozart enthusiasts. It was a glorious time in the history of the town when Figaro's Wedding and later on Don Giovanni, the latter written for Prague expressively, were performed at the Nostic Theatre. All this recognition came to Mozart when he was entirely refused by Vienna. A similar case was that of Beethoven a few years later.

The musical reservoir of preclassicism very often made itself felt outside the country of Bohemia and Moravia. Czech musical emigrants, having found fame and market abroad, strongly influenced the development of European classicism. Many of them were very independent individuals and by their sound musical training became valid members of musical life in their new homes. The first and most important was the Benda family who went to live in Berlin. They were related to the Brixis of Prague. The eldest of the group František Benda (1709—86) was an outstanding violonist of his time. He contributed to violin playing and to violin composition the Czech melodious spontaneity and a soulful expression. He was the precursor of Slavík, Kubelík, Kocián, tradition of Czech violonists. The next Jiří (George) Benda (1722—95) was

musical director at the Court of Gotha. His contribution again was a scenic melodrama. He took up and developed the idea of J. J. Rousseau who was the first to come with a dramatic declamation accompanied by instrumental music. In his melodramas Ariadne in Naxus (1774), Medea (1775), Pygmalion (1779) he used a dramatic recitative, a most advanced technique of musical drama in his days. In the first two of his melodramas he preserved the tragical ending in spite of the general custom that demanded "il lieto fine"-a happy end. But he did not stop here. He also wrote several Singspiele, e. g. The Country Fair (1775), the Lumberman (1778) the artistic quality of which is much better than that of J. A. Hiller, the German master of the trade. In "The Country Fair" there are arias the dramatic tension of which is in direct relationship with arias of Beethoven's Fidelio. Benda, a disciple of Voltaire and Rousseau, was a direct forerunner of Beethoven in the independence of his esthetical and philosophical thinking and his musical spontaneity. The clearest document of this is in Benda's piano concert in G-min. (1778) composed at a time when Beethoven was eight years old, and where there is such a musical contemplation that would suit Beethoven in about 1800.

The second important group of Czech emigrants found their home at Mannheim. These were Jan Václav (Johann Wenzel) Stamic (1717—57). František Xaverius Richter (1709—89) and Antonín Filtz (1730—60). Their importance for the development of orchestral plays and that of symphony was delt with in the work of H. Riemann. These Czech emigrants led directly to Joseph Haydn and W. A. Mozart on the way of symphonic composition and their importance for European music of this kind is now generally acknowledged. Very often though we meet with the ommission of the fact that by their musical

education they are a direct expression of Czech musical culture of the 18th century. Stamic was a Czech, born in Haylíčkův Brod, Richter came from Holešov in Moravia. The days of their musical education were directly connected with the beginning of Czech preclassicism and of Czech attempts at symphonic composition. At that time Jan Adam of Questenberk, a rich aristocrat, was an enthusiastic patron of music. In his country seat at Jaroměřice (Moravia) there lived František Míča (1694-1744) who composed several oratories, cantatas, and operas in which he stands under the influence of Ant. Caldari. But in his "opening symphonies" he is definitely preclassical. This is a new light on the origin of "the Mannheim symphony". Both Stamic and Richter spent their youth in the vicinity of and direct contact with Jaroměřice and their preference for menuets - typical form of a classical sinfonia - had its origin in Jaroměřice Manor musical tradition. This proves that the Mannheim emigrants brought to their new home not only their spontaneous melodics, but also forms which they had learned at Jaroměřice.

Quite a separate place in the Czech musical preclassicism is taken by Josef Mysliveček-Venatori (1737—81). He was born in a village near Prague. In 1763 he went to Italy. There he became famous for his operas. They were played on all big Italian scenes and his popularity was so great that he was generally called "Il divino Boemo". He was by 19 years older than Mozart. We must remember this when we speak about his operas. They are quite different from the baroque type of Italian opera by their characteristic classical melodics. Mysliveček most geniously combined Italian inclination to melody, with his own inspiration and Czech preclassical training which he received in the traditions of Černohorský. His thematic

melodies are so expressively classical that there is not a fundamental difference between his work and that of young Mozart. In his sinfonias, arias, and chamber compositions he is most closely related to Mozart's musical expression. Mozart himself appreciated Mysliveček very much. They met for the first time at Bologna in July 1770 and since that time, as we read in the letters of Leopold Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus never lost an opportunity of visiting Mysliveček. (At Verona October 1771, at Munich October 1773). They were very good friends. Mysliveček's works suggested much to Mozart's composition, but of course Mysliveček lacked Mozart's synthetic genius for the perfectness of classical expression.

Besides the Berlin-Gotha and Mannheim groups and besides the works of Mysliveček there is still the Viennese group. It is not very important even if in close connection with Gluck, Joseph Haydn, W. A. Mozart and L. van Beethoven. Its representatives are: Florian Gassmann (1729-74), a follower of Gluck, Jiří Pichl (1741—1804), from Bechyně near Tábor, a follower of Haydn combining this influence with French elements and Czech melodics, Jan Vaňhal (1739-1813), Vojtěch Jírovec (1763-1850), Pavel Vranický (1756-1808), Leopold Koželuh (1752-1818), who are only average masters of Viennese classicism, their only merit being in their fresh melodiousness. Only J. Hugo Voříšek (1791—1825) has the mark of real genius. In his piano and chamber compositions he is the pioneer of musical romanticism and is a recognized predecessor of Franz Schubert in the lyrical compositions for the piano. Neither V. J. Tomášek (1774—1850) must be forgotten.

Jan Ladislav Dusík (1761—1812) settled in Paris after a long travel. In his piano compositions he formed an interesting and quite new transition from classicism to the romantic melody and

harmony. In that same city there lived another Czech Antonín Rejcha (1770—1836). His importance as a composer is not so great as his work of a professor of composition at the conservatory in Paris. He educated many outstanding pupils and wrote a treaty entitled "Cours de composition musicale" (1818) and a "Traité de haute composition musicale" (1824—26). This work had remained a leading information source on the theory of composition, and, in the German translation by Czerny, was used as a text-book in most European countries. Its quality lies in the fact that building on the classical principle it opens the way to the romantic conception of composition.

Considering the general situation of the 18th century music we see that Czech music was a considerable contribution. The development of European classicism in music was partly conditioned by the Czech preclassical period. Jiří Benda, Josef Mysliveček, the Mannheim emigrants, and F. X. Brixi are organic links which connect baroque with classicism. Their omission from the logical continuity of musical history would break the natural development of these styles. These people were not great personalities like Monteverdi, Scarlatti, J. S. Bach, Händel, W. A. Mozart, Haydn or Beethoven but they were the pioneers of a new style and their importance lies in their intuition for recognizing the new forms and possibilities of a style, conditioned by the rationalistic philosophy of those times.

As an expression of Czech culture they represent the only outlet of Czech creative spirit forced by political conditions to the smallest scope of individual expression. Music is the only Czech contribution to the 18th century culture.

## FROM BEDŘICH SMETANA TO JOSEF SUK

VLADIMÍR HELFERT

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If the 18th century produced a number of outstanding musicians the 19th century was a real Golden Age of Czech music. Only the conditions of development were very different. The awakening of the national spirit throughout Europe resulted in a fast development of Czech arts and science. The romantic movement by its tendency to emphasize individual importance of national groups was a direct impulse for an individual and national music. In any such purely national attempt there lies a danger of cultural isolation. Czech music was lucky in having Bedřich Smetana (1824—84) to lead the way. His music springing entirely from the national spirit kept its international appeal.

The name of Bedřich Smetana will always be pronounced in the same breath with his comical opera The Bartred Bride (1866). It is true that just this opera is the best representation of Czech nature: humour, country merry-making, and at the same time a deep lyrism of a humble man, his quite clearly optimistic relation to life. The world now judges and appreciates just this side of the Bartred Bride. It is a worthy contribution of a Czech master to European culture. The quality of making people happy, of loving one another, of laughing freely and sincerely while being lyrical without an untrue pathos will always be recognized and will ensure the popularity of this opera just as the same qualities made famous Figaro's Wedding or The Barber of Sevilla.

Even if we Czechs ourselves prefer the Bartred Bride to all other operas we must not forget that this is only a very small part of Smetana's importance to the music of this country and of the world. In this so very typically Czech opera Smetana shows his capacity of writing a typically national work without merely putting Czech folklore on the stage. His relation to a folk-song is more than using its motives for his composition. That sort of thing was dreaded most by this man whose relation to the life of his nation went much deeper than an immitation of its songs. His melodies and positively genious characteristics, even if inspired by folklore, are never a mere quotation of some popular song. If we study the Bartred Bride from the point of view of musical structure we shall see a supreme technical composition and a mastery of form. Smetana's relation to folklore and inspiration may be most clearly illustrated by his use of the polka. Polka is a kind of folk dance which in the first half of the 18th century spread all over Bohemia and flooded the contemporary dance-music. Polka is a round dance and the time is a pretty quick two-in-a-measure. Smetana used it in his compositions for the piano and in the Bartred Bride, but this is an orchestral specimen, composed on the rythmical structure of the dance. In this form it later on was accepted by the romantic music. Smetana used the same method in writing his Furiant. Furiant is another rapid Bohemian dance with a very decided yet often changing rythm. Smetana has to it the same relation as Chopin had to the mazurka, polonaise, and the waltz: The intention of bringing a popular dance-tune to purely instrumental music and higher composition. Smetana's Czech Dances (1877) are the best document of this tendency. Motives taken from popular dancemusic are used as material for excellent piano compositions which mark the highest that had been done up to that time. This means that Smetana's relation to folklore music was far from the simple-minded point of view which believes to have a whole composition ready when hearing a folk-song and that all that is needed is to introduce it into the world a little bit brushed up by the writer's "arrangements". Smetana never descended to this kind of arranged conglomeration. His work, even if inspired and growing out of the folklore sources, always kept an independent inspiration of harmony and melody and a well-thought out structure. This he always kept up even if the rest of Europe indulged in an easy immitation of folk-song. His creation springing out of the depths of the people's spirit was accepted as a perfect expression of Czech national genius. But it was a free and independent composition.

Smetana was neither a folkloristic nor a buffonic character as may be concluded from the general popularity of the Bartred Bride. All his life he followed the lights of great art. To put it plainly: the structural bases of his work and even life perhaps tend to classical principles inspired by passionate inspiration of his musical thinking. It is a very interesting case of personal combination and individual synthesis between classical style and a romantic glow of inspiration. The motive itself is his material from which he builds a firm organic construction, glorying in unceasing inspiration. His dramatic work combines a symphonic melody with a dramatic expression. Like a true son of his musically gifted nation he brings his dramatic style to unusual vocal fulness. He proves that a rich and delightful tune need not oppose a clear declamation but that these two parts of dramatic music can be combined into a vocally rich and quite clear expression. His operas Dalibor (1867), Dvě vdovy (Two Widows, 1874), Hubička (The Kiss, 1876), Tajemství (The Secret, 1878), Čertova stěna (The Devil's Wall, 1882) still show one of the ways to perfect opera creation. His Libuše (1872) shows the highest inspiration and the highest qualities of his style. It is his masterpiece, written as an extatic prophecy of the future. It is the expression of his love for his people.

His first three symphonies Richard III. (1858), Valdštýnův tábor (Wallenstein's Camp, 1859), Haakon Jarl (1861) still have the same form and the same imperfectness of form as symphonic poems written by Liszt. It is only in his monumental cycle My Country (1874-79) that he is entirely free of any foreign influence. My Country has quite an independent possition in European music. In the first place it is the first large cycle of six symphonic poems: Vyšehrad, Vltava, Šárka, Z českých luhů a hájů, Tábor, Blaník, bound with a single idea which is led to a victorious triumph in the last number. This leading idea is a firm believe in the victory of the Czech cause which is inspired by the Hussite past. This idea makes My Country a counterpart to Libuše which being a prophetic work itself is a living source of faith in the future mission of the nation. Besides being a monumental cycle My Country has unusual value in the field of musical composition. Here Smetana solved Liszt's problem of a symphonic poem. It no longer is an illustration suffering from a shattered form, it is built on strictly symphonic principle of construction. My Country represents a monumental unity of six architectonically perfect constructions full of rich musicality. The synthesis of melodious richness of passionate intensity and a perfect structure makes it forever important. The history of European music will always be proud to have such a strictly connected and highly inspired cycle, and it is unfortunate that very often it is broken up and only the more popular parts (Vltava) played. It is a work which has grown out of the darkest days of Smetana's life: he was wholly deaf when he wrote it. His deafness broke out all of a sudden in October 1874 and was a foreboding of his dreadful fate. He died ten years later in a lunatic asylum. The cycle written at the beginning of his tragedy is full of wonderful optimism and of living faith in the future of his nation.

There is still another side to Smetana's work: his last compositions. They are not yet fully appreciated for they are very little known abroad. Already in his first quartet Z mého života (From My Life, 1876) which is well known abroad Smetana tried to show the new conception of a quartet form in expressing neo-romantic fulness. In his second quartet in D-min. (1883) there are added new purely musical values. It is surprising that Smetana, suffering from deafness, tried to reach new harmonic and melodic possibilities. In his last compositions i. e. the second quartet, the symphonic poem The Prague Carnival and in the unfinished opera Viola (Shakespearean subject) his spirit soars high to form unusually concise, harmonically daring works quite precocious for his time. Only our days appreciate this courage of modernism and a feeling for the future development of music. Smetana's work and his personality are the personification of a lively faith, a joyous optimism and rich melody. At the time when European music was held by romantic pessimism and was driven into a hopeless decadence, at the time that all Europe suffered from the morbidity and fatigue there came this crystal-clear spirit to bring a new hope of life, a new believe in humanity, a new love to Man and human society all expressed in his spontaneously joyful music. He brought it consciously as an artist who passing through the problems of artistic culture of his time was able to keep his

individuality. This is the reason why his proclaiming the philosophy of optimism was done in an artistically perfect taste. It is not only the spirit of his art, but also the perfect structure of his work that ensures for him a very honourable place among the greatest of this world.

The second genius of modern Czech music is Antonín Dvořák (1841—1904). Recognized at a very early stage and helped by Brahms and Hanzlick his work had an open road into all the world. There were times that he was the only recognized composer. The merit of his work lay in his spontaneous melody springing out of a rich fundamental musicality. It was a relief for the music of the world which at that time was overcharged by the symbolic pathos of Wagner's musical neo-romanticism. In this respect Dvořák's importance is generally accepted. He does not represent a type of musical architect or a pioneer fighting for new forms, but a type who lives richly of his inexhaustible, spontaneous, and elementary gift of music. Dvořák's melody that is a true natural element that changes any impulse, coming from the outside, into a reaction of perfect music. As all elemental strength his spontaneous melody is difficult to master and Dvořák's life is a struggle to make all these streams flow in a deep monumental way. In compositions where he could disregard any cultivated and stabilized form, where he could sing like the man in the street, where he could let himself be carried away by his simple soul he gave a most spontaneous expression of a Czech mind, of its merry idealism, its zest for life, and the joy springing out of instantaneous happiness. This is the inspiration of his Slavonic Dances (1878, 1886) and of his Scherzo movements in symphonic and chamber music. And right next to these quite wordly joys there are melodies of humble and deep piety free of all dogma. This again is the inspiration of his addagio movements. He liked his form well prepared by tradition, that is the reason for his perfect composition within classical limits. His dances, string quartets and symphonies belong to all the world and their contribution to European music is their fresh melodic richness, their rythmical quality, a passionate musical inspiration and a devotedly pious meditation. It is the expression of aspontaneous Slavonic soul full of glowing and joyful vitality. There is much more in it than a sensuous beauty of music, there is the unpathetic natural synthesis of beauty and strength which is the inspiration of Slavonic culture in general.

From his nine symphonies it is the New World Symphony (1893) which is known the world over, and which brings Dvořák's art to its culmination.

It was England to whom fell the privilege of having recognized him first. Svatební košile (The Spectre's Bride, 1884), Svatá Ludmila (1886) and his glorious Requiem (1890) were rendered at many concerts, often under Dvořák's own conductorship. These are oratories within Händel's traditional form, but Dvořák's rich musicality gave them quite a different mission and opened the way to neo-classicism disregarding Wagner's morbid pathos.

The same may be said about his operas. They have one drawback. For Dvořák, a simple and spontaneous soul, it was too much of a complicated problem to keep a uniform style. But in spite of all the inconsequence of style there is a rich treasury of musical ideas. The best is Rusalka (The Water-Nymph, 1900). It is a perfect expression of a poetic musical setting of a fairy-tale. Besides Král a uhlíř (The King and the Cöllier) Rusalka gained access to many European Opera Houses.

Dvořák is the first of modern Czech composers who were in

direct personal connection with different countries. England had seen him nine times and awarded him with an honorary degree of the University of Oxford. Hespentthree years in America as the head of the National Conservatory in New York. By the personal contact with the great master of Czech music the way to the world was opened for Czech musicians and their art.

Smetana and Dvořák, each in his own way, contributed much to the music of the world. The 18th century tradition of good Czech musicians and music culminates in these two personalities even if at that time (19th century) it was no longer necessary for them to stay abroad. They both returned to Prague (Smetana from Sweden) and by the force of their art they founded a modern school of musical composition.

Quite an independent artistic personality is Leoš Janáček (1854-1928). For a very long time he was not known abroad and not recognized at home. It was only after the first performance of his opera Její pastorkyňa (Jenůfa, 1916) that his way to the world was opened. Even if his work by the date of its origin belongs into the period closed by the First World War the recognition of his work makes it quite modern. What is new about his music (even in his own country) is the Moravian inspiration of his compositions. It is marked by an impulsives energy combined with passionate feeling. There is stil something which must not be forgotten when we listen to Janáček's music. While Smetana and Dvořák let themselves be inspired by the culture of the Western hemisphere Janáček's inclinations and liking draws him to the East, to Russian culture and music. That sometimes is the reason of his belated acceptance in the Western parts.

His music grows out of Moravian folklore. He himself was an expert in Moravian folklore music and in collaboration with František Bartoš he published a collection of Moravian folksongs. His relation to folkloristic music was the same as in Smetana's case. He refused merely to immitate. The melody of his music is based on Moravian intonation which leads to a new type of vocal composition.

His other inspiration was Russian music. His masters Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakof and Mussorgsky. From these two: Moravian folklore and Russian music, serving as a foundation, springs his quite individual character of a composer. For him motive is an impression in which the whole musical reality is concentrated. He is the first representative of musical realism which in his operas was inspired by masterpieces of Russian literary realism. Dostovevsky, Tolstoy, Ostrovski gave him subjects for his operas: Káta Kabanova, Anna Karenina, etc. His importance lies in dramatic works. He consciously left the principle of romantic symbolism and was the first to compose a realistic opera (Jenufa). This was a raid of spontaneous dramatic feeling with its healthy background of simple life into the symbolically overcharged Wagnerian sentiment. We must not forget to mention a very charming opera Liška Bystrouška (Smartie the Fox, 1923).

Janáček's vocal compositions are very little known abroad. Perhaps the reason may be seen in their typically Moravian subject (the text being poems by Petr Bezruč, a regional poet). Among the vocal composition performed at the Festival of the Contemporary Music Society was his Slavonic Folkmass (Glagolská mše, 1926). From his orchestral compositions it were especially the Symphonic Rapsody Taras Bulba (1917) and the Symphonietta.

Janáček's music in general is very exclusive and it is easy to see why he was not accepted in his time. Only after the Great War, when new realistic problems of social politics have arisen, and this reality was transferred even into the field of art, Janáček's compositions could be appreciated. He was the light showing the way into the future.

Among the followers of Smetana or Dvořák must be quoted the names of Zdenko Fibich (1850—1900) and Josef Bohuslav Foerster (1859), the former President of the Czech Academy of Science and Arts. Zdenko Fibich is at his best in his dramatic trilogy Hyppodamia (1889—91). He tried here a daring combination of a spoken word and instrumental music. J. B. Foerster wrote six operas, many choirs but is best known by his lyrical songs. His choirs belong among the best of this art and are full of his lyrism and melodic beauty.

From the younger generation it is Vítězslav Novák (1870) and Josef Suk (1874—1935) whose music has been recognized even abroad. Novák's importance for Czech music is his intelligent and sometimes ironic contact with all movements of artistic and intellectual creation of all the world. He was not only the first to react to Debussy's influence, but his merit lies in a personal style which, even if accepting impressionism, was able to master it in an individually Czech way. His love and understanding of Moravian and later on Slovak folksongs was the source of his melodies. This is also his contribution and the reason why he was accepted by the world. His chamber music, his symphonies and choirs made him famous abroad. Let us only mention: The Second Quartet in D-maj., the symphonies In the Tatra Mountains, and The Song of Eternal Desire. He also wrote four operas and two ballets.

Josef Suk related to Dvořák in his work and life (he married Dvořák's daughter) developed into a master composer of fine and enticing lyrism. His technic is most complicated. The work of his mature age—the symphony Azrael (1906), the Second Quartet in C-maj. (1911), the orchestral suite The Story of the Summer (1907), and his last monumental symphonic poem The Epilogue (1932) are the highest point of composition and instrumentation in modern Czech music. Suk belongs to the most fortunate followers of Dvořák on the way of modern Czech melody. Suk's importance for modern Czech music is that he tried to follow the tendency of leaving romantism and forming a new style. But in contrast to other European composers he did so slowly without sudden breaks. He started in the Dvořákian tradition but he was the first to become one of the leading personalities of modern musical endeavour. His modernism is not an episodic experimentation.

It is just to say that Suk and Novák represent modern Czech music in the field of European contest. Like in the past centuries Czech music of our days again brings the great gift of fresh melody and of clear and optimistic relation to life.

Inspired with the national spirit of the Czech nation it is recognized by the whole world. The work of Smetana, Dvo-řák, Janáček, Novák, Foerster, Suk is the property of the world and the pride of Czechoslovakia.

### MODERN CZECH MUSIC

#### VLADIMÍR HELFERT

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The general situation of European music will explain the reason why modern Czech music the conditions of which are in direct relation with other European music does not have any such outstanding personalities as Smetana, Dvořák, Janáček, later Novák and Suk were to their time. European music as well as all literature, plastic arts, and spiritual life in general finds itself in the state of regeneration. Today we witness a most interesting, but excessively troublesome and dramatically tense period of regeneration in all spiritual values; and in artistic creation this regeneration is manifested by a change in the style of life. The present time, by which I mean the time since the First World War, looks for a new way of expressing and defining the relation to urgent questions of the tempestuous social, political, and spiritual stir. And so sometimes it finds what it seeks, sometimes it is only an experiment, and sometimes it is lead astray.

Those who have grown up to believe in definite and firmly rooted values of classicism and romanticism are bound to be confused and inclined to see in this present unformed style of life only disorganisation and decadence. He, however, who got used to viewing the development of human endeavour from the high and distant perspective of centuries and more, will understandt his present whirlwind and this longing for a new style not as a destruction of the old, but as a preparation and accession of the new.

In music this transition period into a new style is most apparent. The existing propositions of musical imagination on which baroque, classicism, and romanticism have built are being changed in their very substance: An illustration? The idea of consonance and dissonance is slowly changing and receiving quite a new meaning, we no longer call dissonant what would have been termed so some twenty or thirty years ago. That brings us to unexpected conclusions and the present melody growing so far out of the old conception of consonance, dissonance, and harmony which was based on the same principles, must necessarily undergo a substantial change. In short a time of regeneration has come and new musical principles both in style and expression are earnestly sought for. There is a likeness between this time and that of the early baroque (1550-1600) when polyphony was slowly replaced by a new musical imagination based on harmony and melody, growing from the modern conception major or minor. That means that our time cannot yet have any definitive and constructive results. It is a time of groping—a time of preparation for great constructive phenomena which come only when new principles of style are becoming evident. This will not happen very soon since music, as well as other manifestations of spiritual activity, are only a part of the great social and political regeneration which Europe is so painfully undergoing.

If we consider modern Czech music from this point of view we shall see that there can be found no such definite and decisive personalities as those representing the culminating era of romanticism. Neither can such personalities be found in European music taken as a whole. Such a Schömberg, Stravinskiy, Prokofiev, Hindemith are definitely pioneers in new music, but there is no such greatness about them like in the case of Monte-

verdi, J. S. Bach, W. A. Mozart, L. v. Beethoven. Their power lies in their undaunted sincerity in finding new expression.

The same may be said about modern Czech music. It also is subject to a period of reformation; it also has composers who sincerely and courageously seek a new way of expression paying for it by personal popularity. In the work of Vítězslav Novák, Otakar Ostrčil, and Josef Suk there are the first signs of this endeavour. Of the three Otakar Ostrčil is very little known abroad. But his operas Poupě (The Bud, 1910), Legenda z Erinu (The Legend of Erin, 1920), Honzovo království (Jack's Kingdom, 1933), and his orchestral work S. Impromptu (1911), Suite (1912) and the monumental Way of the Cross (1928) belong to compositions bearing all the hall-marks of modern European creation. In judging Ostrčil's work we must not forget the influence of his teachers Zdeněk Fibich and Gustav Mahler. As far as Mahler is concerned Ostrčil took the highest qualities of his composition especially his free polyphonic imagination.

Besides Ostrčil it was Karel Boleslav Jirák (born 1891) who came under Mahler's direct influence. His compositions in the field of symphonic, and chamber music, his songs represent a very important factor in the Czech musical constructivism.

Ladislav Vycpálek (born 1882) went a quite independent way. His music based on perfect polyphony though barbaric at times, his meditative spirit reaching sometimes extatic pathos are so exclusive that even at home he has not met with enough appreciation. His vocal compositions a Cantata about the Last Things of Man and Beatus Ille (inspired by the personality of T. G. Masaryk) have not yet passed across the boundaries of the country, though his compositions in general are of high European standard, his technic is perfect, his inspiration spring-

ing of his clearly cut personality and the musical tradition of his country.

The question stands: what was the contribution of Czech composers to the above explained development of new stylistic principles in European music: There are two names: Bohuslay Martinů (born 1890) and Alois Hába (born 1893) known abroad as well as at home. Bohuslav Martinů, inspired by the music of Stravinsky and modern French music especially that of Roussel, found a new technique of composition which enabled him to form a witty and quite individual way of musical expression. Thus he grew into a remarkable creative personality, combining the French and Russian inspiration with his Czech melodics and his sense for the fascinating power of sound. In this way Martinů represents the Czech reaction to the progressive creation of Western music. In later years the Czech element is stronger and stronger finding its inspiration mainly in folklore music. Since the time of the 18th century emigrant musicians no Czech composer has been awarded with such a recognition as came to Martinů in Paris where he had lived for some years. But it was not only Paris that recognized him, he is now known all over the world.

Alois Hába's importance lies in quite a different field. His early inspiration was Bussoni and Schömberg with his school. His aim were a new style nad new principles of expressions. He is the most radical of Czech modern musicians. This radicalism has resulted in experiments with the quater-tone music and his theory of antithematic style. He has refused all propositions of style commonly used up to now. It is evident that such work is mostly composed of seeking a new way without creating new values acceptable to the general public. It is to his honour that he has the courage of finding new ways even if ridiculed by his

contemporaries. He does not stand alone though, and has some devoted followers with his brother Karel Hába (b. 1898) among the first of them.

We should not forget to mention the names of those composers who have not yet had the opportunity to be judged abroad even if their work very often ranks among the best of the European production of our times. Let us remember Rudolf Karel (b.1880, d.1944) whose cantatas, symphonies, and chamber music have accepted much from the modern European orientation while his operas are built rather on Czech tradition. Otakar Zich (b. 1879, d. 1934) stands among the pioneers of a new opera style. Emil Axman (b. 1887) builds his work on the tradition of his native Moravia. Jaroslav Křička (b. 1882) follows the line of musical wit and humour. Bohuslay Vomáčka (b. 1887) in the beginning a most radical modernist has finally fallen back onto traditional melodics. Otakar Jeremiáš (b. 1892) tries to combine the Smetana tradition with modern conception of music. František Pícha (b. 1893) follows the tradition of Josef Suk. Vladimír Polívka (b. 1896), Jaroslav Ježek (b. 1906, d. 194?), František Bartoš (b. 1905) and Iša Krejčí (b. 1904) represent the modern musical endeavour of these days. Among others Pavel Bořkovec (b. 1894) combines in his orchestral work Western modernism with his own sound musical training. Emil Hlobil (b. 1901) is an intellectual constructivist. Janáček's school produced many composers with a very vivid sense for modern musical creation. Let us mention only: Jaroslav Kvapil (b. 1892), Václav Kaprál (b. 1889) whose lyrical "Uspávanky" (Lullaby Songs 1934) are popular even outside Czechoslovakia, Vilém Petržalka (b. 1889), Pavel Haass (b. 1899), and Osvald Chlubna (b. 1893).

Now, the Czech contribution to the music of Europe in the

last twenty years is about the same as it was in the 18th and 19th centuries. The difference lies in the fact that this being a time of reformation and reconstruction of style there are no such outstanding personalities like Smetana or Dvořák. The fundamental character is the same: the same standard as in other parts of Europe and which is more a specific quality of Czech harmonious and fresh melodics. This last trait is characteristic of Czech music and can be followed in comparison with European music since the Middle Ages. It may be less evident in the last twenty years, at least there have been complaints that modern music means decadence of traditional melodics. Such a criticism seems to me very partial, as it forgets the necessity of a new melodic version demanded by a new style which naturally cannot find romantic melodies a satisfactory means of expression. This leads to the conclusion that a new conception of melody is formed; a melody which is to serve a new musical imagination ruled by quite a different understanding of consonance and dissonance. In this proces an honourable place falls to Czech music. Modern Czech melodics in comparison with modern European melodics still keeps the characteristic trait of freshness and spontaneousness even when it is the means of modern melodic expression.

To complete the list of contemporary composers we give the following names not included in the article:

Vladimír Ambroz, Břetislav Bakala, Milan Balcar, Jan Zdeněk Bartoš, Josef Bartoš, Josef Bartovský, Vilém Blažek, Zdeněk Blažek, František Brož, Josef Bubák, Jarmil Burghauser, E. F. Burian, Jan Cikker, Václav Dobiáš, Jaroslav Doubrava, Jan Fischer, Zdeněk Folprecht, Jan Hanuš, Ilja Hurník, Karel Husa, Jindřich Jindřich, Miloslav Kabeláč, Václav Kálík, Jan Kapr, Vítězslava Kaprálová, Miroslav Krejčí, Jaroslav Kromb-

holc, Rafael Kubelík, Rudolf Kubín, Václav Martinovský, Jaroslav Maštalíř, Bořivoj Mikoda, Alexandr Moyzes, Vít Nejedlý, Jiří Pauer, Hubert Peřina, František Pícha, Josef Plavec, Miroslav Ponc, Zbyněk Přecechtěl, Karel Reiner, Jan Rychlík, Jaroslav Řídký, Jan Saidl, František Schäfer, Theodor Schäfer, Jan Schneeweis, Klement Slavický, Josef Stanislav, Eugen Suchoň, František Suchý, Jiří Svoboda, Antonín Šatra, Otakar Šín, František Škvor, Karel Šrom, Vladimír Štědroň, Jaroslav Tomášek, Václav Trojan, Dalibor Vačkář, Miloš Vignati, Jindřich Vojáček, Sláva Vorlová, Zbyněk Vostřák, Emil Votoček, J. Vogel, František Vrána, Karel Weiss, Jan Zelinka, Jaroslav Zich, Felix Zrno.

## FOLK SONGS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

DR JOSEF PLAVE C

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There are very few countries that can boast of so many, so old, and so varied folk songs as Czechoslovakia. This shows the unusual creative power and tasteful discrimination in music, folk costumes and dances in general. The fundamental and elemental love of music and singing is as old as the nation itself. It is not a mere coincidence that the first religious song in Central Europe was composed in Bohemia. It was known as early as the 11th century and has ever since been sung in the churches of the country. It's text is simple: a prayer for peace and abundance and of thanksgiving (Hospodine pomiluj ny—Our Lord, have mercy upon us).

Popular chorals from the times of the Czech Reformation (15th century) were in direct connection with the name of John Huss and the Lutheran songs were modelled on them. The Medieval secular folk songs have not come down to our generation. Only very few fragments are preserved and those mostly in country customs and Christmas carols. We have a larger number of baroque songs, but that was the time of political and social oppression. It was after the tragical battle of the White Mountain and the country suffered under the hard absolutism of the Habsburgs and under social and economical oppression of foreign aristocrats who were given Czech confiscated property. Numbers of people left their country and among them there were many musicians—composers and instrumentalists. To quote a few names Václav Mysliveček-Venatori,

George Benda and his family, Jan Václav Starnic. Abroad they played a very important part in the development of European music. The common country people remaining true to their native land, found consolation in songs. Just in those times of the most tyranical government the most beautiful folk songs and very many picturesque dances were composed. We may trace there the echo of contemporary aristocratic life—in Bohemia many songs have a menuet style or the rocco co indulgence in ornaments which influenced country emb roidery and painting as well as folk costumes. The invention however is purely popular and proves great poetic and musīcal gifts of the common people.

As the national tradition was kept up mainly by country people most of these folk songs deal with country life and country customs. But there are also the songs of soldiers, students, artisans and others, but most of these are of later origin. As far as the text is concerned they are like the songs of other peace loving nations; the subjects are the life and work of a farmer, changes of the seasons, partin gand meeting, many of them in a satirical or humoristic tone. There are nearly no epic songs, only very few ballads, from the Eastern parts of Czechoslovakia mostly. A great collector of these songs the Czech poet František Ladislav Čelakovský was the first to state the remarkable difference between Czech folk songs and the songs of other Slavonic peoples. The Russians and the Yugoslavs have many heroic epic songs—the Czechs have none. Their songs are lyrical, mostly optimistic. This characteristic trait of Czech mental make-up has always been of great value in all their struggles against oppression. It helped the people in the times of vassalage to foreign aristocra.cy and the same spirit carried them through the horrors of Nazī occupation. This also

explains the popularity of Smetana's Bartred Bride. Its introduction is the expression of the Czech people's philosophy-: Let us enjoy life when God has given us health — It is a simple and popular philosophy, but the people have never lost hearts. even in the most difficult circumstances they learned to be patient and hope. T. G. Masaryk, the first president of Czechoslovakia, himself preached this philosophy of sound optimism and the same inspires the idyllic and lively songs which are often dance tunes. The Czechs and the Slovaks have such amounts of these songs that even expert collectors have not been able to register them all. The folk song in Czechoslovakia is not a thing of the past, it is a living organism—especially in Moravia and Slovakia the eastern provinces of the republic new songs keep on appearing and a great effort will be needed if they all are to be collected, written down, registered and published to become part of the folk-lore history.

Working for about forty years the Folk-Song Institute, a state supervised institution, has registered more than 25 000 Czechoslovak folk songs. It is the work of many people, the first and most important of them was Karel Jaromír Erben (a Czech poet) who collected Czech songs; František Sušil and František Bartoš in Moravia and Silesia, Karel Weiss, Otakar Zich and Jindřich Jindřich (born 1870) collected regional songs from the South and West of Bohemia, Ludvík Kuba, a painter, published a very large collection including songs of other Slavonic nations. Jan Malát arranged about 1000 folk songs for solo or choir singing. In Moravia it was Pavel Křížkovský and Leoš Janáček, to the latter these songs were also an inspiration for his own composition. The same applies to Vítězslav Novák, a contemporary expert in folk-loristic music and a composer. He is interested mainly in Slovak songs. (In 1945 Josef Bohuslav

Foerster then 86 years old and Vitězslav Novák then 75 years old were awarded the honorary title Artist of the Nation.) Modern Czech and Slovak composers feel their close relation to folk songs of the country and either collect and harmonize these songs or let them be their inspiration. The works of František Pícha, Emil Axman, Jaroslav Křička, Alexander Moyzes, Otakar Jeremiáš, Bohuslav Martinů, Václav Štěpán, Ladislav Vycpálek, Alois Hába, Karel Hába, Václav Trojan, Iša Krejčí, and many others are best proof of this very strong influence. There also are many choirs like the Prague Teachers' Choirs, Moravian Teachers' Choirs, the Smetana, Křížkovský, Typografia, glee clubs and others who made it their programme to sing folk songs at their concerts at home and abroad, even if they also include songs composed by different artists. Their high standard and their old tradition place these choirs among the first in the world.

The rythm and the poetic form of Czechoslovak folk songs exercised a great influence upon the poetry of many Czech and Slovak writers. The revolutionary journalist of 1848 Karel Havlíček Borovský wrote his political satires in the meter and fashion of folk songs. Since that time there were many poets who could not resist their charm. Let us give the names of Adolf Heyduk, Josef Václav Sládek and from the younger generation Jiří Wolker and Josef Hora.

In plastic and grafic arts we must not forget the painters Josef Mánes and Mikuláš Aleš (19th century) who illustrated many songs. In our days it is Josef Lada, Karel Svolinský, Vlastimil Rada, Vojtěch Sedláček and others who keep up this folk-loristic traditions.

Folk songs in general are the true echoes of the region of their origin. Every province has its very own, differing from others in dialect, form and kind. But they are connected with the neighbouring region and in this way they form a bridge form the West to the Slavonic East. Western Bohemia is directly under the influence of western music-most of it in major, rythmically regular, reminding in form of classic western music. In Moravia, Silesia, and mostly in Slovakia the tune will be in minor, time irregular and even the tonic will differ from that generally used in European music. There is a direct link between Czech, Slovak, Lusatian, Silesian, Polish, and Ukrainian songs. There also are some gipsy elements in Slovak songs,-and this is not the only foreign element of course. But these songs genuinely absorb this foreign influence and use it to serve their own purpose just like any true artist would do. Where Slavonic elements are concerned we may find texts and tunes which are common to many tribes. They manifest the spiritual relation of all Slavonic peoples, similarity of their thinking and feelings.

The general and international appeal the folk songs of all countries have is their value in the relations of all nations. They are a model of simple natural taste, they are a paragon of simplicity and which is more of sincerity. They are the true picture of the people whose property and creation they are.

# THE CZECH ART OF REPRODUCTION DR HRÍ DOSTÁL

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The story of Czechoslovakia in the World War has been told and retold all over the world. The Germans wishing to erase it from the history of civilization have succeeded in writing its name with glory into the minds of all truth-loving peoples.

Masaryk and Beneš are the names of the two men who have meant much in the last fifty years. But it is not only these two who represent their country abroad. There is another tradition which Czechoslovakia is proud of. The tradition of music. Smetana, Dvořák, Suk are known wherever there is love of music; and many men considered it a privilege to have heard Ema Destinnová sing or Jan Kubelík play.

The universal appeal of art has made it possible for members of a small nation like ours to be accepted like kings. Frontiers, nationality or race may sometimes be a barier to all other human activities. Art disregarding all goes victorious wherever it pleases.

But even art is subject to time, at least one of its many branches: The reproduction of music. And to those whose glory is limited to the short time of their activity the following pages are dedicated.

For many and many years the saying: "Every Czech is a musician" has been known and very often repeated in all scales of meaning. Complimentary and less so. It is true though that the Czechs are highly musically gifted, and that Czech instrumentalists have sat in orchestras and bands all over the world.

At home the tradition is as old as the nation itself. Its history has been explained in different other chapters of this book. All we can do within the limit of these few pages is to give a few lines to those who helped to build this tradition and at least the names of those who hope to do so in these days.

Since we have mentioned the name of Jan Kubelík let us begin with his art first.

The story of violin playing, even if not so old as other arts of this country (organ, lute, bassoon), has been very important. The figure of a "Bohemian fiddler" has stepped out of so many pages of international fiction of all ages that we see his counterpart only in an Italian—preferably Neapolitan—singer. But like all these typical characters of novel-writing The Bohemian-Czech fiddler is based on reality. There were many consciencious artist who for one reason or another left their country to find fame and market abroad. Let us only mention the Bendas who setting in Berlin and Gotha contributed much to the art of violin playing; František Benda (1709-86) was among the best violinists of his time. Jan Václav Stamic (1717-61), a composer and violinist, an outstanding member of the Mannheim school. Antonín Vranický (1761-1819) was a pupil of Haydn and Mozart, he and his brother Pavel Vranický came from Moravia to live in Vienna, just like František Krommer-Kramář (1759-1831), Václav Pichl and many others.

The real glory of violin playing in Prague began with the opening of the Conservatory. The first master was Wilem Pixis (1786—1842) born in Mannheim and a pupil of Viotti. He began teaching in 1811. It was from this school that came Josef Slavík (1806—33) whose life was short but full. He was

called the Czech Paganini. He was a friend of Chopin and himself composed several concerts for the violin. He died in Budapest at the age of 27.

Pixis was followed by Mor. Mildner and again his pupils went all over the world. Let us mention at least Jan Hřímalý (1844—1915) who went first to Amsterodam and later on to Moscow where he had many concerts and educated many Russian violinists; Ferdinand Laube who toured all Europe and had success everywhere, he went to live in Russia, where he died. Antonin Bennewitz (1833—1926) an excellent music teacher and later on the head of the Prague Conservatory.

From his school came František Ondříček, Karel Hoffman, Josef Suk, Oscar Nedbal, Jan Mařák, Rudolf Reissig, Otakar Ševčík and many others. František Ondříček (1857—1922) was best known from that group. He continued his studies in Paris, travelled all over the world and died abroad. He was famous as an excellent and first interpreter of Dvořak's Concerto for the Violin. Otakar Ševčík (1852—1934) became a worldfamous teacher of violin playing. Among his Czech pupils were Jan Kubelík and Jaroslav Kocian.

Jan Kubelík (1880—1940) was a real star of his art. He went from one country to another and there from one success to another. He toured ten times the United States. Last time in 1936. He died in Prague during the first years of the Nazi occupation. Jaroslav Kocian (b. 1883) was also known outside Europe. He visited not only the West but the East as well having been several times in Russia. He is living in Prague, but does not play any more. Karel Hoffman, Josef Suk, and Oscar Nedbal are better known as composers than instrumentalists. But we must not forget that it was these three and Otto Berger who formed the Czech Quartet in 1891. The activity and

success of this Quartet is known all over Europe. The perfectness of their rendering Smetana, Dvořák, and Beethoven was generally recognised. Let us also mention Hanuš Wihan who succeded Berger and who, in his turn, was succeded by Ladislav Zelenka (the only living member of the Czech Quartet—he is the rector of the Prague Conservatory in the running academic year 1945—46) and Jiří Herold who took Nedbal's place. The Czech Quartet perfected the purely Czech style of interpretation combining the Slavonic intensity of feeling with the Western refinement of culture. The present Czech Philharmony has inherited much from this tradition. The Czech Quartet stopped its activity only shortly before the second Great War and thus for 40 years has lead Czech Quartets.

Other pupils of Ševčík: Bohuslav Lhotský, Karel Procházka, Karel Moravec were the members of the Ševčík-Lhotský Quartet.

František Stupka and Václav Talich both conductors of the Czech Philharmony, Ervína Brokešová, Richard Zika, Ladislav Černý were also Ševčík's pupils.

Jan Mařák, a pupil of Bennewitz, was the teacher of Váša Příhoda, Stanislav Novák, Kitty Červenková, Jiří Straka; some of these belong to our days already and since we are too close to them and they have not yet closed their work let us give only names.

V. Frajt, Jaroslav Pekelský, Bohuslav Ších, Štěpán Suchý, Jindřich Feld, Bedřich Voldán, Jaroslav Štěpánek, Ludmila Bertlová-Kubelíková, Bedřiška Seidlová, Spytihněv Šorm, Jan Vratislavský, Jaroslav Vaněček, Jiří Straka, Dr Alexander Plocek, Evžek Prokop, Stanislav Novák, Josef Leichner, Josef Peška, Norbert Kubát.

Closely related to the violin is the viol. Outstanding instru-

mentalists of this art are only in this century. But we must not forget that Antonín Dvořák himself for a time played the viol in the orchestra of the National Theatre. Here we should give at least the name of Oscar Nedbal, Karel Moravec, Ladislav Černý and Antonín Hyksa.

The violoncello has always been very popular in our country. In 18th century it was Ignac Mára and his son Jan Christoph Mára who were recognized masters of this art. The Prague Conservatory too had very good teachers. Bohuš Wihan whom we have already mentioned as the violoncellist of the Czech Quartet has educated a number of good musicians, so has J. Burian and later on Karel Pravoslav Sádlo. His work brings us to contemporary violoncellists. Here are some of the names. Ladislav Zelenka, the present head of the Prague Conservatory and the last living member of the Czech Quartet. Miloš Sádlo, František Smetana, Bohuš Heran, Váša Černý, Ivan Večtomov.

While speaking about the masters of string instruments we have repeatedly mentioned the Czech Quartet. This was only a realization of old tradition. All over Bohemia and Moravia chamber music hand been practiced for many centuries. In Czech literature and biography many stories are told of enthusiastic musicians trudging a long way to play a trio or a quartet with friends. Village schoolmasters, country parsons and doctors, found great pleasure in these chamber music parties and many an assistant-master has been accepted or a parson granted a living on the strength of his music.

But it was only in 1891 that a professional group was formed. Growing from the old tradition of Chamber music the Czech Quartet established itself as a body of international renown. We have already mentioned that their merit lay in forming a typically Czech way of reproduction. The

example and success of the Czech Quartet gave rise to many similar unions. It was the Ševčík-Lhotský Quartet in 1903; the Czechoslovak later on the Prague Quartet in 1920; the Ondříček Quartet 1921. Later on the New Czechoslovak Quartet, the New Czech Quartet, the National Theatre Quartet and the Smetana Quartet were formed. The last which is the youngest of them all has for its members the pupils of the conservatory. It is lead by František Neumann, a violist and violinist; the first concerts of this quartet were a great promise.

But it were not only string instruments that had been practiced in this country. The same is true about wind instruments. While the strings were often the privilege of the better educated classes the wind instruments were the property of the people. Many a country band was formed to play at dances, funerals or weddings and charming stories and even nursery rhymes tell about village musicians who had many adventures on their way home from a "fête"; for witches and fairies danced for them as they once did for Tom O'Shanter.

The instruments used by these country bands belong to the clarinet and horn families mostly and then of course pipes, later on the brass were included. As we see these "instrumentalists" were mostly country people with no special education and they were known only in their own district. Still there is a famous name as early as the second half of the 18th century. It was Jan Václav Stich who accepted the name of Giovanni Punto (1746—1803), travelled all over Europe with his horn. That he was a recognised master of his art, may be seen from the fact that Mozart composed a concert for him and Beethoven a sonata.

The horn became very popular in this country. It was the

favourite music of Count František Antonín Špork (18th cent.) who richly endowed its study.

But only our days have seen the origine of formal ensembles of this kind. It is the Wind Quintet founded by Dr Václav Smetáček in Prague and a similiar body in Brno with the name of the Moravian Wind Quintet. Quite new (1946) is the Wind Quintet of the Czech Philharmonics.

There is another art which has a long tradition in this country. When Mozart came to visit Prague, he spent his happiest days at the Villa Bertramka. His host there was František Xaver Dušek (1731—99). He was a pianist and composer. His beautiful wife Josefina, an accomplished singer, presided to many a private concert in her "salon". It was for her that Mozart wrote Bella mia fiamma.

The next name on our list is Jan Ladislav Dusík (1760—1812) born in Čáslav—a little provincial town—he lived in England (1790—1800) and in France (1806—12) where he died in the services of Prince Talleyrand. He gave many concerts in Italy, Germany and even in Russia. He was a charming man of a strong adventurous personality. He was the first to play so that the public could see his face—as it is done in our days. His many compositions—concerts and sonatas are played even now.

Václav Jan Tomášek (1774—1850), a composer and pedagogue, founded a piano school in Prague to be succeeded by Josef Proksch (1794—1864) who was the teacher of Bedřich Smetana. For this most typically Czech composer was an accomplished pianist as well and his compositions for the piano show a great understanding of this instrument. Since that time there are many outstanding pianists and many of them more recognized as composers, like e. g. Zdeněk Fibich (1850—1900). Karel ze Slavkovských, Josef Jiránek (1855—1904); Smetana's

pupil and until 1918 the head of the Prague Conservatory Jindřich Káan z Albestů (1852—1926), Hanuš Trneček, Adolf Mikeš, another master at the Prague Conservatory. The same is true about Karel Hoffmeister and Vilém Kurz. The names below are among the best known today. Jan Heřman, Roman Veselý, Josef Páleníček, František Rauch, Otto Vondrovic, Rudolf Firkušný, Viktorie Švihlíková, František Maxian, Václav Štěpán, Illona Kurzová-Štěpánová, E. Mikelka, Oldřich Kredba, Václav Holzknecht, Karel Vinklát, Karel Šolc, Jaroslav Obenberger, Pavel Štěpán, Zdeněk Jílek, Ilja Hurník and others.

Closely related to the pianists are our organists. The organ, by its function a part of divine service, has always drawn to the choirs all the musicians of the congregation. Right here is the origine of Czech music. The arrangement approved of by the authorities that the head of the school was also the organist of the church has educated many an excellent musician, and music like teaching became traditional occupation running for several generations in the same families.

This pedagogical function of the choir may bee seen in formal schools for music founded by the organists. The most famous of them was the Prague Organists School founded by Bohuslav Černohorský (1684—1742). He was the director of music at St. James' in Prague since 1739 and may be considered the Father of Czech Polyphony. He learned much in Italy where he was four times and where he was very popular. They called him "il Padre Boemo" there. His pupil Jan Zach (1699—1773) became the organist in Mainz. Černohorský's teaching spread all over the country in the compositions of František Xaver Brixi (1732—71). He became the director of music at St. Vitus' Cathedral in Prague. His importance is in his com-

positions mostly. There he lay the foundations to Czech classicism and so prepared the way for Mozart. His church music, popular all over the country, was the prelude to Mozart's masterpieces. There is still a story to be told. It illustrates the conditions of choir music in Bohemia. When Mozart came to Prague he went to visit Jan Chrysosthomos Kuchař (1751—1829) the organist of the Strahov Praemonstrate Monastery. There in the church Mozart improvised playing instead of his host. Kuchař, a man with an unusual musical memory, wrote down all, by heart, to the master's most satisfactory content.

Most of our organists were unknown outside their own country. But we must remember at least Josef Foerster (1833—1907) musical director of the St Vitus' in Prague, Ondřej Horník (1864—1917), Josef Klička (1855—1937), Karel Stecher (1861—1918), Eduard Tregler (1868—1932), František Musil (1852—1908), and the present professor of the Prague Conservatory Bedřich Wiedermann (b. 1883). From his pupils let us mention at least Jan Kraja, Jiří Reinberger, Bedřich Janáček, Josef Kuhn.

Last but not least comes the harp, which was very popular in this country not only among the great of the land but also among the people.

In the 18th century a Czech pupil of Haydn Jan Christoph Krumpholz went to live in Paris. Sophia Dusík-Corri (1775—1847), wife of the pianist Jan Ladislav Dusík, was very well known for her harp-playing. In our times it is Václav Klička (1882) who spent a long time in Holland, Bedřich Dobrodinský, soloist of the Czech Philharmony, Marie Zunová and Libuše Poupětová.

Considering the musical gifts of the Czechs it is surprising

that a formal symphonic orchestra was founded as late as 1896. This strange fact is explained when we take into consideration that these people suffered under a foreign rule of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and that any cultural privilege was denied them. It was only the European era of rationalism and the following interest in national groups that have helped the Czechs to win back some of their lost rights. It was a revival of the national spirit, and naturally it was in music that the Czechs sought their means of expression. First a private club of the members of the National Theatre orchestra the Czech Philharmony worked its way up to its present standing of a State Orchestra of Czechoslovakia. As the story of the Czech Philharmony is dealt with in a separate chapter, let us only give some names of conductors who worked with this orchestra or with that of the National Theatre or lately with other Czech orchestras: František Škroup, Bedřich Smetana, Adolf Čech, Karel Kovařovic, Otakar Ostrčil, František Neuman. L. V. Čelanský (1870-1931), Oscar Nedbal (1874-1930), Vilém Zemánek, Václav Talich, Raphael Kubelík, Pavel Dědeček, Jaroslav Krombholc, Václav Kašlík, Karel Ančerl; Otakar Jeremiáš, Václav Smetáček, Otakar Pařík.

In the years of the first republic (1918—38) new orchestras were formed: The Prague Broadcast Orchestra conducted for a long time by Otakar Jeremiáš; The Symphonic Orchestra FOK (FOK stands for film, orchestra, concert) was intended first to play only light music but has developed into a good symphonic body. The conductor is Václav Smetáček. The Film Symphonic Orchestra is the youngest of all and is lead by Otakar Pařík.

There is still a special ensemble in Prague which may be considered half way between chamber music bodies and orchestras. It is the Czech Nonet. It is the only permanent body of its kind in the world. It was founded by Emil Leichner, a violinist, in 1923. It is composed of nine soloists including: violin, viol, violoncello, contrabass, flute, oboe, clarinet, fagot, horn. František Hertl—the contrabass—is the artistic leader.

The early beginnings have seen the Czech nonet in Latvia where its members taught at the Klajpeda Conservatory. But even after their return to Prague they have often toured Europe.

Their merit lies also in the fact that many composers have written for them and a new type of composition was added to Czech music. There is very little written in classical music (Spohr), but on the repertoire of the Czech Nonet there are also octets, septets (Beethoven) and even quintets and string quartets. Now they have more than 70 compositions by different composers written for them.

Having told about Czech instrumentalists we must give what is due to singing. Czechoslovakia is not the country of "bel canto", but the people here are as fond of singing as anywhere else in the world. This may be seen in the unusually great amount of folk songs and their popularity all over the country. Trained singers first appear in the 18th and especially in the 19th centuries. The reason for this is the same as we have seen in other branches of culture. There was no education or training for a Czech unless he accepted the culture and language of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Many an Austrian or German great man is of purely Slavonic descent.

We have already mentioned Mozart's hostess in Prague Madame Josefina Dušek (1754—1824); she was once called "the Czech Gabrielli" and had great success in Vienna, Dresden, Weimar. But the first systematic training was given to Czech singers only by František Pivoda (1824—98) who founded the

first school for singers in Prague. From his pupils we may remember Marie Sittová, Gabriela Roubalová, Josef Paleček, Vilém Heš, Růžena Maturová, Emil Burian.

In 1873 another school was founded, it was a part of the National Theatre, and was supervised by Bedřich Smetana. The teachers were: Josef Lev (1832—98) who rendered the first Přemysl in Smetana's Libuše; Jan Lukeš (1824—1906), the first Dalibor at the National Theatre and a guest of the operas in Königsberg, Dresden, Breslaw, Hannover, Brussels, Nürnberg, Budapest, and elsewhere; Otilie Sklenářová-Malá (1844—1912) and other members of the Czech opera. Among the pupils was Adolf Kroessing (1848—1933), an outstanding buffo tenor who was extremely popular as Vašek from the Bartred Bride. He sang the part 547 times!

Other names from the times before the first great war are: Bohumil Benoni (1862—1942), a barytone, who became a writer and pedagogue. Karel Čech, a bass; Emil Burian (1876—1926) who made his debut in Köln am Rhein and sang as guest in many famous European Opera Houses. Karel Burian (1870-1924) who began in Brno, was in Prague several times for a longer period, sang in Paris, Dresden, Bayreuth, the Metropolitan in New York, Chicago, Boston. His equal in glory was Ema Destinová (1878-1930) who sang in Bayreuth, Paris, London, at the Metropolitan, in Chicago, Boston, Washington. At home she was the unforgettable Libuše. She was as good at her concerts as she was in the operas. Berta Lautererová-Foersterová (1869-1937) began singing at the National Theatre but very soon left for Hamburg and later on for Vienna. Růžena Maturová (1869—1938) who was very popular in Mannheim, and who sang in concerts halls and operas in Warsaw, Russia, the Balkans, America. We must not forget

the very famous friend of Ema Destinnová. It is the soprano Gabriela Roubalová called La Boema (b. 1843). Her success was really great. She went three times round the world. She sang in Manila, Java, and at the Metropolitan Opera in New York she alternated with the famous Adelina Patti. She finally settled in Melbourn Australia where she died.

Much younger were Kristina Morfová (1889—1936), a Bulgarian by birth, Otakar Mařák (1872—1939), Ada Nordenová, Gabriela Horvatová and Emil Pollert.

Those are in direct connection with our days already.

From contemporary singers let us give some names at least: Jarmila Novotná, member of the Metropolitan in New York; Vilém Zítek, Marie Podvalová, Marie Tauberová, Milada Červinková, Drahomíra Tikalová, Miluše Dvořáková, Zdeňka Hrnčířová, Marie Veselá, Marta Krásová, Štěpánka Štěpánová, Beno Blachut, Bronislav Chorovič, Oldřich Kovář, Jaroslav Gleich, Karel Hruška, Stanislav Muž, Zdeněk Otava, Jaroslav Křikava, Theodor Šrubař, Eduard Haken, Vladimír Jedenáctík and many others.

All these singers are soloists, but we must not forget a very important instance in Czech musical life. It is choir singing. Since very old times this was a popular way of musical performance and Czech chorals sung by the people in churches were the model for European music of that kind. The last century saw the rise of many song clubs and associations. The first was the Hlahol (Glee) in 1861. This was a union of amateur singing enthusiasts. But even proffessionally trained groups began to be formed. Perhaps the Teachers Choirs are the best among these. The first was the Moravian Teachers Choir 1903. Then followed The Prague Teachers, both men and women, the Prague Glee Club Smetana (1908), The Typografia 1924 and others.

The Czech chamber singing has also many good ensembles. Let us give the name of the Czech Madrigalists at least.

As we can see from this very uncomplete article Czech music has held an honourable place among other nationalities. Let us hope that now, when nobody will oppress independent creation, the Czechs will contribute only the best to the world's endeayour.

## THE PRAGUE CONSERVATORY

#### DR VÁCLAV HOLZKNECHT

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Prague is a very old and a very beautiful town; and it owes the beauty to its tradition of high culture and artistic sense which has added year by year, decade by decade, century by century all that was best in mind and work to its glory. Prague has not only an architectonic beauty coming from many centuries, but it has the oldest university and the oldest conservatoire in central Europe. It has always been the center of artistic and intelectual life of this part of the world. If in 1811 the Union for Promoting Music in Bohemia founded a conservatory in Prague it was only a formality which legalized the old tradition of the people's musical gifts and training.

As early as the very beginning of Christianity the musicality of the people found its outlet in choir singing during the services. In the times of Charles IV (14th century) there was a special school for choir boys endowed by the emperor himself and connected with the St. Vitus (Guy) cathedral founded by the same sovereign. The Hussites and later on the Moravian Brethren had organized groups of singers who were systematically trained, and the chorals of those times, are the best of this kind. In the times of Rudolf II (16th century) Prague became a kind of Medicean accademy in the field of music and after the White Mountain catastrophy in 1620 music moved to church choirs and country school masters. It is from these that came people like Benda, Stamic, Mysliveček–Venatori, who all have left their poverty-stricken homes to find their fame and market abroad.

This musical and general tradition enabled Prague to understand Mozart when the superior Vienna had turned him down. At that time already Bohemia was called the Conservatory of Europe.

These were the propositions on which the conservatory was built and then the whole musical life of the country was centered. Right at the beginning the school was lucky to get as headmaster Bedřich Dionys Weber, a man of culture and learning with an unusual flair in the choice of teachers. He had an excellent organizing mind as well. The school only educated musicians for orchestra playing and it was situated in the Dominican monastery of St. Aegidius. In 1815 the voice class was introduced and in 1888 the piano class. In 1888 the school was united with the organists school that had existed for many years already. The Conservatory had all conditions for success. On 16th September 1884 the school was given a lovely building built by the Prague Saving Bank and the headmasters were all not only artists but conscientious organizers. The names of them are J. B. Knittl, J. Krejčí, A. Bennewitz, the famous Antonín Dvořák, K. Knittl and J. Káan. After the political liberation of 1918 the conservatory became a state institution and the head is chosen by voting every year from the members of the staff of the so called maestro school which is the highest department of the conservatory. The maestro school corresponds to other schools of highest learning. It includes classes for composition, violin, violincello, piano, conducting, organ playing and only the graduates of the conservatory or those passing a strict examination are admitted.

Some of these classes are proud to own pupils like Jan Kubelík, František Ondříček, Jaroslav Kocián. This is the time of glory for the violin class with Otakar Ševčík as headmaster. Pupils from all the world came to Prague, and even when old maestro Ševčík retired, they followed him to his south Bohemian provincial town Písek. But not only the violin has so much glory, lately it is the piano class with Jan Heřman and Rudolf Firkušný for graduates. The composition class also is on a high standard and ranks among the best of this kind in Europe. It is represented by the graduates Vítězslav Novák, Josef Suk, Josef Bohuslav Foerster or the great theory master Otakar Šín. This class has educated most modern Yugoslav composers. The success of the Conservatory was conditioned by the high gifts of the pupils and great pedagogical capacity of the professors among whom were artists known all over the world like Dvořák, Suk, the Czech Quartet members, and many others.

This all sounds very idyllic but there were also troubles in the way to glory. In the times of the first republic the beautiful building Rudolfinum was changed into a provisory seat of the Czechoslovak Parliament and the school spent 17 years in an old Benedictine monastery—a place most unsuitable for a school of this type. But even from this poor abode it was turned out by the monks who found the sonorous pupils rather a trial. The next building was a part of the Institute for Chemistry. That again was not adequate. Only after the second liberation in Spring 1945 Rudolfinum was given back to the Conservatory. Even then for a time a part of the building had to be reserved for the parliament before another provisory building was found and adjusted for it. The very tough life which the institution showed in the times of adversity is a promise of further development now when it has come into its right. A new organization of the school status is being worked out and will adjust it to modern demands. The school will be divided into two main departments. The first a college with a five years' programme including general education besides the specialization in music. The academic standing will be that of other secondary schools in Czechoslovakia (a junior college standing in America). The second will correspond to a university education in music; it will last 4 years. The artists will have opportunity to complete their education and general knowledge without which we cannot imagine a contemporary artist. The Prague Conservatory wishes to equip their graduates with a sound general education and a perfect training in their musical doctrine. This is the reason why the new reform is conscientiously planned. In this way the school wishes to help in the reconstruction of the new republic and hopes to continue in the good old musical tradition of the country.

# THE NATIONAL THEATRE.

### FERDINAND PUJMAN

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Like in other countries the early beginning of the Czech theatre is connected with the church. It was in the 13th century that the first performances took place in the church of St. George in Prague. These plays are of a strangely touching simplicity and even now have a strong appeal, as we saw in war time, when they were played in their original setting—the church.

The next step to our endeavour in this field comes from Jan Amos Komenský-Comenius (16th century), the great Czech pedagogue. He stressed the educative importance of the drama and went as far as recommending dramatized versions of school instruction. In his opinion every contemporary college graduate should be able to enact any character in a play. He himself composed a very witty play about Diogenes.

The 18th century is the time of religious and political persecutions and of social oppression. The country ruled by the Habsburgs—foreigners on the Czech throne—or by their feudally minded representatives—the immigrating foreign aristocrats—was too poor to keep her best sons. But as Romain Rolland puts it, it was the Czech school that played the first fiddle—quite literally in this case. Let us mention the melodramas by Jiří Benda, which Mozart liked so much that he never travelled without them. Let us remember the symphonies written by Jan Václav Stamic, and the operas by Mysliveček–Venatori which again were a model for Mozart.

Later on there were the baroque sacred plays by D. Zelenka which remained popular late into the 19th century. This was the Golden Age of Czech dramatic music. It was in the 19th century that there came the first impulse for building a theatre which would open the road to truth and beauty speaking to the people in their own tongue—in Czech.

This educative motif, a legacy perhaps from Comenius, this love of the people, of the language and of all Czech culture united all men and women of the nation in the intention of procuring a dignified abode to Czech art—the National Theatre. He who knows the way Germanic Austria administered the country will understand that not only money but a united effort of Czech statesmen, artists, men of science, and the sacrifice of the commonest and last of the citiziens was needed to overcome the obstacles in the way leading to the realization of this plan. Bedřich Smetana was a great help—by his operas he laid a corner stone to its spiritual foundation.

The material and financial part of the story is one of the most touching documents of true love for one's country. Contributions included large sums from the richest people of the land to the widow's penny so to say. Stones for the foundations were brought by enthusiastic helpers from the frontier mountains of the country. Artists gave their best in building and adorning this building which became a symbol of national unity. Let us mention the names of J. Zítek, the architect, M. Aleš and J. Hynais, the painters.

What rejoicing there was when finally the theatre was opened and what disaster when a few weeks later it burned down completely. It is perhaps the genius of the people, a true gift of God that the harder the times the closer the unity. Again all efforts were united and two years later a new building was

erected. It stands at one end of the most beautiful Prague embankment; on the other end there is the museum of Bedřich Smetana. The theatre faces the Prague Castle with the old churches that have seen the origin of Czech dramatic art.

The traditional union between the opera and the drama has been kept up and so the National Theatre is the home of either. It is perhaps the only stage in Europe where this combination is still kept. Following the old tradition the contemporary artists: conductors (Kovařovic, Ostrčil, Talich), producers, architects: singers (among whom we are proud to have had Ema Destinnová, Karel Burian and others), instrumentalists (with Antonín Dvořák playing the viol there once upon a time), all these people work in idealistic competition with the actors from the purely dramatic department. They all try to create works inspired be their own national genius which at the same time would have the power of outgrowing their home-stage and participating in the international contest of quality.

The National Theatre remains the symbol of all artistic and national endeavour and even if in reduced circumstances (storehouses and artistic halls bombed out in February 1945) it tries to offer its public the highest value of the Czech drama and opera.

# THE CZECH PHILHARMONY—THE STATE ORCHESTRA OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

FRANT, BARTOŠ

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The Czech Philharmony celebrates the fiftieth anniversary in spring 1946. It is the oldest popular symphonic orchestra of the country. It is now—since 1945—the state orchestra of Czechoslovakia and that is of great importance for its financial independence. This often was a trouble in the past, and much enthusiasm, idealism and selfsacrifice was needed if the orchestra was to uphold its high standard set by the founders.

It is astonishing that Prague, a town breathing with love of music, for a long time had no regular symphonic orchestra. The theatre, the opera were among the best. Mozart's success in Prague is a proof of the high musical understanding of the people. Symphonic music had for a long time been the Cindarella of this home of music. Occassional concerts of the theatre-orchestras or the Conservatory orchestra was all that was done for it. Bedřich Smetana was among the first to notice this omission and tried to introduce regular symphonic concerts. After his return from Sweden he actually gave a series of regular philharmonic concerts conducting the theatre orchestra. This inspired the members of a musical society founded in 1894. This society accepted the name of the Czech Philharmony—the members were recruited from the theatre orchestras. Two years after the foundation they gave their first concert. It was on the 6th January, 1896 and the conductor was Antonín Dvořák. The concert was given in the hall of Rudolfinum, the building of the Prague Conservatory. It is symbolic that the first to begin these regular concerts was Bedřich Smetana, the first world recognized Czech composer; and the second to sponsor the beginnings of the first regular symphonic orchestra was the second greatest personality of Czech music: Antonín Dvořák. In the programme of that first concert there were sung for the first time Dvořák's Biblical Songs.

As a matter of fact this early Czech Philharmonic Orchestra was still the orchestra of the National Theatre, but if the activity was limited, the society was independent and even arranged an old age insurance of their own for their members. In 1901 there was a strike in the orchestra of the National Theatre as a result of the misunderstandings with the new manager and the Czech Philharmony definitely broke off its relations with the theatre. Now there was the necessity for the members to earn their living without the help of the theatre. This was the actual beginning of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra. There is another symbolic fact connected with the history of the orchestra. The first concert, given by this then independent group, was in memory of the first anniversary of Zdeněk Fibich's death. Zdeněk Fibich is our third greatest composer of the 19th century. His third symphony was on the programme of the evening.

Fate was kind in placing the greatest Czech composers at the cradle of the first Czech symphonic orchestra; less kindness it showed in the material side of the question. There were years of hard striving for the daily bread. Even if the public in Prague was highly musical and music loving it was not yet ready for the financial strain connected with the keeping of a large orchestra. All money saved by the society in the years when the members were employed with the National Theatre orchestra was spent

in a short time and there was no help coming. The idealism which inspired the members to play for the Czech Philharmony without any pay when they had still been members of the Theatre orchestra and even to pay high insurance and membership subscriptions, the same idealism made them carry through the times of adversity giving concerts of popular music in restaurants earning money to be able to play serious symphonic music. Later help was coming from public institutions and generous patrons of art among whom the first was the famous violinist Jan Kubelik. Tours were arranged first through the provinces of the country, later on abroad. Among the first was a two months tour to London with Jan Kubelík as soloist. This was the first time London heard more of Czech music. The Czech Philharmony also played in the summer seasons at the Russian spa Pavlovsk and year by year more invitations were received and more countries visited. The good name of the Czech Philharmony was established and Czech symphonic music found a larger public.

With the growing importance of the orchestra public institutions decided to subsidize the Czech Philharmony which, at least to a degree, helped to take off the greatest material troubles. It was only at the fiftieth anniversary that by a decree of President Beneš the Czech Philharmony became the state orchestra of Czechoslovakia. The date of the decree is the 21st October, 1945. It means the end of financial troubles for the orchestra. Now it can completely devote its strength to symphonic music. The aim is high and the way difficult but beautiful—it helps to build the life of the new democratic republic, building it on the centuries old musical tradition of the Czechoslovak people. The honour of becoming state orchestra was not granted to an unworthy body. Even during the time of

adversity the Czech Philharmony has always tried to serve the high endeavour and to do its duty as a representative of Czech musical culture. The concerts of the Czech Philharmony were moments when Czech intellectual life manifested itself at all times. Through these concerts Bedřich Smetana spoke to his people and his great symphonic work was most piously rendered there. It was at the concerts of the Czech Philharmony that the Czech people learned to know and love the work of Antonín Dvořák and Zdeněk Fibich. This was a legacy left to the orchestra by the great founders and later on the concerts were contests among the striving modernists Josef Suk, Vítězslav Novák, J. B. Foerster-the latter living abroad always sent his orchestral compositions to the Czech Philharmony for their first rendering. Leoš Janáček too, found this orchestra the best interpreter of his last wonderful works. It was a kind of ordeal by fire for every Czech composer to have his work played to the public of the Czech Philharmony concerts. The whole development of the Czech music is connected with the concerts of the Czech Philharmony and it is the ambition of every Czech composer to be played at these concerts.

The development of Czech music could not have been so great if the Philharmony did not bring important for-eign composers classical and modern. This foreign music helped the growth of the orchestra and its conductors, it was the link between the western and eastern cultures. Guest conductors came more often as the name of the Czech Philharmony became known abroad. Let us only remember that for instance Gustav Mahler conducted the first rendering of his 7th symphony, that A. K. Glazunov, Edward Grieg, Pietro Mascagni, Vincent d'Indy, D. Milhaud, conducted their works there; E. Ausermet, Sir Thomas Beecham, F. Busch, E. Co-

lonne, E. Kleiber, O. Klemperer, N. Malko, B. Molinari, Ch. Munch, K. S. Saradgev, F. Schalk, V. de Sabate, G. Szella, B. Walter, A. Wolf, and many others were guests in Prague, and the greatest soloists and singers considered it an honour to take part in these concerts.

There are many foreign names connected with the Czech Philharmony, but the merit for its high standard lies with the consciencious Czech conductors who were conscious of their duty to their country and their own people. Always the best of their kind, they were giving all they were worth to this orchestra. We must not forget the work of K. Kovařovic, O. Nedbal, L. V. Čelanský. Dr. V. Zemánek was a great organizing talent and helped the Philharmony over the most difficult times. Then we come to Václav Talich who has given the orchestra its international fame. The many years of his work there were the years of hard systematic training but also the years of artistic rise. It was in those years that the Philharmony learned a new scale of expression which became finer and more expert and worked out a style of its own, best to be noticed in the fluency and subtlety of its strings as has often been remarked upon by foreign criticism. To Talich's art was due the international success of the orchestra at the occassion of Prague Festivals arranged by the International Society of Contemporary Music in the years 1924—25. Later Talich accepted the leading post with the opera of the National Theatre and his place with the Czech Philharmony was taken by Raphael Kubelík, son of the violinist Jan Kubelík. He is a highly gifted conductor, full of endeavour, an artist of definite conviction and capable of overcoming technical difficulties, persistent by nature he easily takes on his responsibilities and does credit to his family name. He safely led the orchestra in the time of the

political danger during the Nazi occupation and goes on with his work now under easier conditions since all material troubles have been taken away by the presidential decree through which the Czech Philharmony has become the State Orchestra of the liberated Czechoslovak Republic.

## BEDŘICH SMETANA MUSEUM IN PRAGUE

ALFONS VAISAR

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The Golden Age of modern Czech music is the second half of the nineteenth century. It is the time that a new life began throughout the opressed country claiming its right to political, social, and cultural position. The leading personalities of that time were full of this just ardour, and the same enthusiasm and love for the people were the leading motives of Bedřich Smetana's work. He was the first to express the national character in the field of music. His works ranking among those recognized by the world as masterpieces are full of the qualities which make up the character of the Czech nation. All the past and present times, all the hopes for the future are symbolized there. This is the reason why the people in Czechoslovakia understand and love Smetana above all musicians. The same reason makes them worship Smetana's memory and jealously guard every little thing in connection with himself or his work.

A museum has been opened to collect anything in connection with this national genius—a museum which is to be a living memorial of the people's gratitude. It is situated in a small but architectonically charming building on the most beautiful embankment of Prague. There, close to Charles' Old Stone Bridge, right above a weir, it beautifully closes Masaryk's Embankment. It faces the panorama of the Prague Castle with the picturesque roofs and towers of the Lesser Town at its feet.

Inside the museum there are seven halls where the visitors can follow Smetana's hard and troubled life. The library holds large archives, and a study room is opened to anyone who wishes to use it. Nearly all Smetana's papers are there and they are completed by pictures and other documents in connection with the artist's life. In the entrance hall there are portraits of Smetana's contemporaries. In the first hall there are things connected with his youth (1824—61)—the schools and preparative stages in his musical training, some primitive compositions of the child; and the environments in which he grew up. There are the exercise books from the music lessons with J. Proksch; documents of the first meeting and relation with F. Liszt; the time of the revolution in 1848. Here is his Opus 1—a few pieces for the piano dedicated to Franz Liszt, further the Piano trio and the first symphonic poems composed in Sweden. Smetana driven out by the difficult conditions at home spent nearly five years in that country.

The second hall holds the most important manuscripts or their photographic copies and papers connected with the origin of Smetana's work. Beside the widely known Bartred Bride and the nationally most characteristic Libuše, there are scores, pianoscores and drafts of all his other operas, the symphonic cycle My Country, some choirs, chamber and piano music. Presents which Smetana received in recognition of his great art decorate the hall

The third hall contains documents of contemporary life since Smetana's return from Sweden—that is 1862—74. They illustrate the times in which The Brandenburghers in Bohemia, The Bartred Bride, Dalibor, Libuše, Two Widows and some minor symphonies were written. Here are the papers concerning Smetana's activity in the choir Hlahol (he was choir-master

there), in the artists' union Umělecká beseda (U. B. was the centre of all artistic activity of the country); Smetana's critical work, documents of his conductor's work with the Prague Philharmony, and finally his work with the opera of the National Theatre. All this proves Smetana's systematic work which served first to promote the art of his country next to that of other slavonic nations and then to bring to his home all that was great in the art of other nations. There are also the documents of his fight for the new conception of Czech music and for its importance—and then in the height of this fight Smetana met with greatest tragedy of his life—he became entirely deaf. The last document in this hall is the theatre-bill of the last opera Smetana was ever able to hear.

The fourth hall holds the things from the tragical last period of the deaf master (1874—84). Smetana left Prague to live in the solitude of the country. Even then and there he did not stop working. From this time come the final scores of My Country, the operas the Kiss, the Secret, and the Devil's Wall, the famous quartet From My Life, the piano cycles the Dreams, and the Czech Dances, and his last works Quartet in D-min., the Prague Carnival, and a fragment of the last opera Viola with a Shakespearean subject. In the same hall there are the souvenirs of the hundredth performance of the Bartred Bride and a sad collection of last documents speaking about the great man's horrible illness and his death at the asylum in Prague. A collection of personal and family keepsakes and some of Smetana's drawings are the last exposition there.

In the passage there are first prints of Smetana's works as they appeared during his life and a collection of his portraits and honorary diplomas.

The staircase leading to the second part of the exposition is

hung with theatre-bills from abroad, introducing Smetana's operas, and some drawings of costumes once used in these operas at the National Theatre in Prague.

In the fifth hall there are documents concerning different performances of the Bartred Bride, and in the sixth hall those of all other operas. There are pictures, drawings, models of the scenes, posters and theatre-Lills, programmes and statistics.

The seventh hall is Smetana abroad. From the very modest beginnings in Petrograd, Zagreb, Hamburg, to the sensational success in Vienna 1892 and from there to all the world. Pictures, theatre-bills, programmes, occassional and special prints from England, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Roumania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, are collected there next to those from the United States, Argentina, Brazil, the Union of South Africa, Australia, China, India, Turkey.

The corridor onto which these last four halls open holds illustrations used in different editions of Smetana's work.

Those who wish to study this most typical of all Czech musicians will find all they need in this small but carefully collected museum and when they go out and walk towards the National Theatre that stands at the other end of Masaryk's Embankment cannot but understand Smetana's love of his country. There they have his river Vltava flowing majestically past the historical Vyšehrad, and in front of them there is the symbol of Czech independence the Prague Castle. Here they are in the very heart of Smetana's Country.

## THE MUSEUM OF ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

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IAROSLAV MIKAN

The visitors of Prague are surprised to find in the midst of austere-looking hospital buildings a small patch of a garden with a baroque summer-house in it. The local people refer to it by the name of America, but it has very little to do with this great country. As a matter of fact it was built by Killián Dienzenhofer, the great master of the barrocco at the beginning of the 18th century. Inside there is the Greek god of music Appollo painted on the ceiling of the great hall. (The painter was J. F. Schor.) This forms the setting to Dvořák's museum in Prague II, U Karlova.

The house is in baroque style—a symbolic setting—it is in the baroque music that Dvořák finds his beginning. The musical tradition kept up by country schoolmasters is partly the inspiration to his opera the Jacobite. But let us look at the exposition itself. The first part is Dvořák's childhood in Nelahozeves and Zlonice (1841—56) when there is not much music in his life. In fact he was apprenticed in his father's butcher shop as became the family tradition. It was only in 1857 when he was allowed to enter the Prague organist school. His life there, and the difficulties he had to overcome when earning his living, are illustrated by the second part of the exposition. In the third we see the master giving lessons and playing in Karel Komzák's band. But it also proves his efforts in selfeducation with the help of his rich colleague Karel Bendl. He fought with failures and learned composing songs, chamber music and the sym-

phony The Bells of Zlonice. The year 1873 is the breaking point and from that time his glory grows. The Prague Choir Hlahol rendered his vocal composition Hymnus and this was the beginning of a new era. At that time he gave up playing the viol in the theatre orchestra, accepted the post of organist at St. Adalbert's in Prague, married his pupil Anna Čermáková. In 1874 he got a state scholarship and could give up his job of organist and depend from the income of his work as a composer. This period is the fifth part of the exhibition in the museum and it means Dvořák's entrance into the outside world. J. Brahms published his Moravian Duets at Simrock's in Berlin. It is the time of Stabat Mater, Tvrdé palice (The Blockheads). His first international recognition came after the Slavonic Dances, which are contained in the sixth part of the collection. This is the year 1878, the Slavonic Rapsody follows, then a String Sextet. They are played by J. Joachim and the Florentine Quartet. The seventh part includes the time when Dvořák composed his Violin Concert and a Mazurka composed for Pablo de Sarasate. Another violin contribution is a Sonata in F-maj. The piano players received the Legends for four hands and the eastern world the opera Dimitriy. The eighth part contains Dvořák's academic gown which was given to him with the honorary degree of the University of Oxford. Number 9: Dvořák's visit to England, later on to Russia and Germany-it is the time of great choir compositions especially the Spectre's Bride composed on a ballad by K. J. Erben. The Hussites Song and his most serious Symphony in D-min. are from the same time. Number 10: The Oratorio St. Ludmila was immediately accepted in England. Next comes the second series of the Slavonic Dances. There are pictures of his study in Vysoká and its countryside. Number 11: The powerful Requiem

ended his close relation with England. Number 12 is the opera the Jacobite where Dvořák returns to his youthful inspiration. The same number includes the Three Ouvertures which are a preparation to his symphonies. Number 13: There is a part of orders, medals and honours that were given to Dvořák. There is also the viol on which he used to play at the National Theatre. Number 14 is Dvořák in America where he is the Head of the National Conservatory in New York. There is the New World Symphony, A Quartet, A Quintet, the Biblical Songs. Number 15 contains the compositions begun in America, e. g. A Concert for Violoncello, Symphonic Poems on the ballads of K. J. Erben and a Heroic Song on his own subject. There are two last chamber compositions, The String Quartet in A flat-maj. and The String Quartet in G-maj. Number 16 are the operatic works. The Czech funny tale the "Čert a Káča" (The Devil and the Shrew) and a lyrical tale Rusalka (The Water-Nymph). Number 17 is the medieval story Armida—it still is a riddle what was the impulse leading Dvořák to this unusual subject. Number 18: The last days and the death of the artist. Number 19: Family pictures and photographs of his friends. Number 20: Parts of correspondence and Dvořákian literature. All parts have many pictures. The ground floor of the Dienzenhofer summer-house contains the furniture of Dvořák's death room and his study.

#### BERTRAMKA

DR. VLASTIMIL BLAŽEK

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This unusually sounding name is one of the many links which connect Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart with Prague. It was in a lovely little country house, known in Prague by this name, that Mozart spent the happiest days of his life.

If I say country house I am speaking from the point of view of Mozart's time. Now it is in a south western suburb of Prague. Even in these days it has kept enough of its original charm, situated in a large garden which once included all the valley and ended in a vineyard. It was years before the villa Bertramka had been built that Carthousian monks invited and endowed with land by John of Luxemburg\* founded large vineyards. That happened in the year 1342. The first news concerning a house on this land come from the 16th century. It changed hands many times before Mozart's Czech friends bought it. This vas on 23th April, 1784. The selling party was Blažej and Theresia Dequai and the buyer Josefina Dušková. The price 3525 guldens. The very beautiful lady was married to an excellent pianist and composer František Dušek and they both met Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart in his Salzburg home. At that time Prague which had always lived in and through music was already charmed with Mozart's Figaro's Wedding and Mr. and Mrs. Dušek invited the famous composer and his friends to come to Prague.

<sup>\*</sup> Fell in the battle of Cressy; it was from his helmet that the Black Prince took the famous ostrich plumes which up to our days are a part of Prince of Wales' coat-of-arms.

When Mozart decided to come—January 11, 1787—the Dušeks were not in Prague. It was Count Thun and Countess Vilma Thun-Uhlefeld who were glad to receive such a distinguished guest. The Thun Palace were several buildings situated directly below the Prague Castle—the main of them is now the British Embassy. There is a lovely garden in the back of these houses.

Mozart did not stay long in Prague at that time, but all the days were an enormous success—on the 19th of January he conducted Figaro's Wedding at the Nostic Theatre in Prague. It was a veritable homage that he received from the public. A man misunderstood by his own countrymen was deeply moved and all he was able to say to Pasqual Bondini, the theatre manager, were just four words—words of which Prague has always been proud: "My Praguers understand me."

Bondini might have been a man of sentiment, but he certainly was a man of business. He offered Mozart 100 guldens, lodgings for himself and his text-writer if he composed an opera for Prague. The conditions being customary in those days Mozart accepted and towards the end of the same year 1787 he and his wife Constance came to Prague. They lived for a very short time in the allotted lodgings in Prague I, Coal Market Square in the house called The Three Golden Lion-Cubs. The Dušeks who returned home to Prague insisted on having him and so he moved to the villa Bertramka. In the poetic solitude of this house, the guest of his musical friends, the centre of their solicitude, Mozart composed his Don Giovanni ossia Il dissoluto punito-an opera on the text of abbate Lorenzo da Ponte. As we had mentioned before Bertramka was far outside the city of Prague at Mozart's time. It was a country house with a very large park and vineyards around it. The access was none too easy. A steep, deeply rutted country road, where Jan Bedřich Knittl the second director of the Prague Conservatory of Music (19th century) was shaken out of his car. iage and falling broke his collarbone, used to lead to the house of Bertramka. But once one passed this rather trying road one came to the very heaven of a peaceful idylic world. A valley closed in on one side by a bare grassy Malvazinka hill—today there are nearly fifty stairs and a steep path leading to the top of it—and on the other side the Black Hill grown with various trees.

The house itself built in stone has kept much of its original aspect. It used to be a regular farm estate. The groundfloor was the flat of the retainer's family to which there was a bell from the second floor. Next to the flat there were the stables and the cowshed. A large terrace was actually a roof to the stables and rooms where harness were kept. All through the large kitchen garden there was a road by which field and vineyard produce were carried to the home farm which most lavishly supplied the Dušeks' kitchen. There were large sheds and granaries, but also well heated bothouses. The second floor of the house is the most important for us. This was where Mozart lived. By a staircase we enter a porch and there is the door to a bigger room with four windows which used to be Mozart's drawing room. The ceiling is higher now than it used to be in Mozart's time. It burned out in 1877 and was changed so that the access to the loft was walled off. The next room is much smaller—there are only two windows, one of them with iron bars. That was Mozart's study. There is a charming story concerning this room. Even great people sometimes cope with time and even their inspiration cannot be ordered at will. Mozart wrote at a remarkable speed all of Don Giovanni, but on the eve of the first performance—everything was ready except the ouverture. Bondini was in fits of fury and despair, the beautiful hostess nearly in tears and Maestro himself sulking in a temper. In the morning of the Day Mozart victorious and proud with the ouverture under his arms emerged from his small study where he had spent the night. All's well that ends well—the same evening Don Giovanni brought down the house and Mozart's "Praguers" nearly went crazy with enthusiasm. It was in the same room some four years later (1791) that he composed the opera La Clemenza di Tito.

By a few steps from the porch and through a beautifully wrought iron-gate we enter the park which untill lately used to be much larger. On the right side of the entrance there still is a bell which used to call Mozart and other guests of the Dušeks to meals. There is a curious story connected with that bell. In 1928 the Czech composer Leoš Janáček rang the historical bell, as was the custom of all visitors, and the heart of the bell fell down to his feet. Janáček died shortly afterwards. It was his first and last visit. Many of his friends considered the adventure with the bell a sign of his approaching fate.

On the upper end of the porch there opens a small hall where parties were given. Many a famous musician took part in the concerts. The highest aristocracy and artists freely used to mix. There they all came to meet Mozart and he enjoyed these parties very much. He liked to play nine-pins and very often in the middle of the game he hurried uphill to a little pavillion where he kept the scores of his Don Giovanni and wrote a tune or two before he took his turn again in the nine-pins game. Nowadays there is his bust there on a piedestal. It is a work of Seidan and was put there by Adolf Popelka in 1876. Not far from here is the last witness of former glory, a maple tree more that 400 years old.

There is still another story, this time showing us the beautiful Iosefina Dušek as a rather determined young woman. She set her heart on a song which Mozart promised to compose for her only. It is very easy to promise especially when the petitioner is a very beautiful hostess. Mozart went the way of all men when attacked by beauty—he promised, but like most men, he did not hurry to fulfil his promise. There he did not know Madame Josefina. One day (November 3, 1787) he found himself locked inside a pavillion in the park and the lady laughing promised to release him only after her song had been written. Mozart would not give in so easily—he haggled: Madame Josefina was to have her song on one condition: she must sing it prima vista, without any mistake, otherwise maestro would burn it. She accepted, and which is more, she—like a true daughter of her nation being an accomplished musician—sang this technically very difficult song so easily and with such a charm that it made the repenting Mozart write two more songs for her in the following three days.

Mozart felt entirely at ease with the Dušeks and he went for trips into the environment of Prague always to return to Bertramka as to his home. In Sadská (a village about 25 miles to the north-east of Prague) where his first biographer František Němeček lived, he learned a lot of Czech folk songs which were new to him and which he liked very much.

His second visit to Bertramka was in 1789. He was on his way from Viena to Berlin with his pupil Fürst Lichnovsky. Madame Josefina was in Dresden at that time. He came again on his way back to Vienna.

At the end of the summer 1791 Mozart, ill and exhausted, came for the last time. His wife and Franz Xaver Süssmayer, his pupil, accompanied him. There, in eighteen days he wrote the

opera La Clemenza di Tito which the Czech Estates asked for. It was to cellebrate the coronation of Leopold II. When leaving Prague after the Coronation he was quite broken by the plotting of his enemies in Vienna and as if in foreboding of his fate he cried bitterly when bidding the Dušeks good-bye. He never came back and died the 5th of December, 1791 in Vienna.

The Dušeks did not lose their interest in Mozart after his death and with the help of Mozart's biographer professor František Němeček they took care of Mozart's two sons Karl and Franz Xaverius.

In 1799 Josef Dušek died and his widow Madame Josefina sold Bertramka. Again this house changed hands belonging for a time (1879—95) to Adolf Popelka a rich merchant and an admirer of Mozart.

On the 1st of January, 1929 the Mozart Union of the Czechoslovac Republic bought the house from the Salzburg "Mozarteum" for an extremely high price.

A new era has begun. Since then it has been possible to see Bertramka every day. The Union tries to preserve all that is left. The house was in a pitiful state of repair. The means of the Union are limited but they do their best. The interest in the house has grown—visitors come and are shown around. Concerts are arranged in the park. Antonín Janoušek, a professor of the Prague Conservatory, organized wind-instrument concerts there—later on string and even orchestra concerts have been given. The accustics in the park are excellent even the pianissimo parts are not lost.

The park has become the reservation of singing birds. It is the only part of Prague where hoopoes, woodpeckers, orioles, live. There are whole families of finches, tomtits and other birds Some of the visitors saw the difficult situation and helped the Union. The owner of the famous rose gardens in Blatná J. Böhm sent 100 bushes of his best roses. Bohuslav the count of Kolowrat had a fence built from planks sent from the woods of his estate. Miroslav Neubert sent thousands of picture-postcards to be sold as souvenirs of Bertramka. František Slavík from Hrochův Týnec gave a new roofing. This was especially needed since into all rooms except Mozart's study rain-water came on every wet day. This was the end of rather picturesque expeditions of Bertramka inhabitants who came with cans, buckets and pails into the attic whenever it began raining. Just imagine a storm in the middle of the night—the stories are still waiting to be written! When the roofing came all inhabitants, many guests, and pupils of the Prague Conservatory gave a hand in speeding up the work.

In the book of visitors at Bertramka many interesting names are signed. Nearly all outstanding personalities of Czech intellectual life like Jan Kubelík, Jaroslav Kocián, Vítězslav Novák, Rudolf Firkušný, Dr. Thomayer, Jaroslav Vrchlický and many others. Among distinguished foreigners there are the names of P. I. Tchaykovski, Louis Spohr, Henri Prunieres, Gustav Holst, Jan Goverts, Dobri Christoff, Vincent d'Indy, Rosa Newmarch, Alexander Glazunov, Henry Doyen, Marcia Davenport (who published a book on Mozart and Bertramka), and others.

When you come to Bertramka now—and we hope you will—you will still feel the idylic spell of the place. A few yards away from modern villas it preserves its charm of aristocratic aloofness closely connected with the home farm. The entrance is a country gate, on your right what has remained from farm buildings, and on your left a small country house

with Venetian blinds on its many windows, with a staircase leading to a white porch with doors through which once Mozart and the beautiful hostess had daily passed. The rooms are now a museum with poor remnants of original furniture, but in the little concert hall which opens onto a terrace and from there into the now crippled park you feel that a spinet might tinkle and a beautiful lady sing, accompanied by a man whom Prague adored, and who rewarded this love by one of the most charming operas: Don Giovanni ossia Il dissoluto punito.

"My Praguers understand me"—they do up to this very days, maestro!

#### MUSIC IN SLOVAKIA

DR IVAN BALLÓ

\*

The fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918 and the new position of Slovakia as a part of the Czechoslovak Republic put that country before the task of solving many a problem. One of them was of vital importance. Slovakia—the country of most beautiful folk-songs-had no independent national musical creation of academic or professional character. This omission in the cultural Slovak endeavour was caused by political and cultural oppression of the Slovak element, and the liberty acquired within the new political organisation was an impulse to new musical activity. The sources were rich but quite elementary: folk-songs and instrumental folk-music with their still ungauged richess and on the other hand a rather limited professional music consisting mostly of choir singing both church and secular—and a very limited number of compositions. There was neither an orchestra nor a chamber-music ensemble, there was no opera-house which would accept and perform a Slovak composition, even had there been any, and there was no encouragement for any such attempts either. The Slovaks who, in spite of all this, had higher musical aspirations had to leave their country and find even their schooling abroad.

This was the case of Ján Levoslav Bella (1843—1936) who had to spend about forty years in Transilvania; of Frico Kafenda (b. 1883), composer, conductor, and pianist, who got his musical education in Germany where he was living for a time; he is now one of the leading musicians at home; and

Gustáv Vladimír Šaško (b. 1887) who emigrated to America.

Those who stayed in Slovakia could compose only for a few singing clubs—the only musical "institutions" being church choirs. Even here they were bound by the extremely limited possibilities of the choir members recruited mainly from very simple people. If they wrote anything with higher aspirations they found nobody capable of rendering it. Besides in the times before 1918 it was impossible to exist with music being one's sole occupation.

Štefan Fajnor composed several choirs and songs, minute compositions for the piano, mostly dance music. A solicitor by profession he courageously took up the defense of the Slovaks who were brought into Hungarian courts. His music was a hobby with him and a consolation in his hard work of a Slovak lawyer (educated in Hungarian and German schools!), defending his patriotic contrymen. Most of his compositions have never been publicly produced. The Austro-Hungarian administration did not encourage Slovak culture, if it insisted on remaining Slovak.

Milan Lichard (1853—1930) was a clerk in Budapest where he acquired a thorough musical education. After 1918 he became a journalist and a manager of a printer's office. In his free time he composed several songs and conducted a choir. Stefan Fajnor as well as Milan Lichard, both tried to prepare the way to Slovak professional creation, making their work grow out of Slovak folk music. Milan Lichard wrote several theoretical books about music.

Miloš Lihovecký whose real name was Ludevít Izák was another of these Slovak composers who, were they given their opportunity, would have been able to contribute considerably to Slovak culture. Neither his work has ever been published. It consists of harmonizations of Slovak folk-songs, his own compositions in the same style, and a critical revision of Protestant hymns.

Mikuláš Schneider-Trnavský (b. 1881), a graduate of the Prague Conservatory, composed many songs and many elegant piano arrangements of folk-songs. He was among the very few who were able to occupy themselves with music only—he was and still is the director of a church choir in Trnava. Another of these happy few was Mikuláš Moyzes (b. 1872). He was a teacher of music in Prešov and wrote mostly vocal compositions—masses and choirs—but also vivid and original orchestral and chamber-music compositions the inspiration of which is plainly Slovak folk-music.

Desider Lauko, a Civil Servant in the financial department, composed rhapsodical pieces of brilliant instrumental style. He was influenced by Liszt and let his inspiration be Slovak folk-songs.

These were the propositions on which the Slovaks started building their own independent musical life after 1918. A great help was the close connection with Czech music which long before had entered the world and, which is more, had stayed there. The Czechoslovak Republic opened all sorts of schools; among them also a conservatory of music, and a department of music at the University to study the history and theory of this art. This and a new opera house gave rise to many orchestral and chamber associations. Slowly but definitely the first stones were laid and music began to be professionally cultivated by and among one of the most musical nations. The changed conditions have brought back to Slovakia two of her best sons Jan Levoslav Bella and Frico Kafenda. Their work, their artistic values, their experience, their Slovak intuition, became an impulse to the younger gener-

ation. We must not forget the perfect schooling Jan Levoslav Bella received in Vienna from Simon Sechter, a teacher whose authority was recognized even by the great Franz Schubert. Bella's relation to Bedřich Smetana is well known. The great master liked to play his own compositions to him. Bella's musical erudition came from a thorough study and a vivid personal contact with the representatives of several different streams of music. When he wrote his masterpieces (late seventies of last century) Osud a Ideál (Fate and Ideal) a symphonic poem, or his Kováč Wieland, he appeared as a representative of most advanced modernism of his time. His work written abroad was introduced to Slovakia after her liberation and became very popular there. Living at home, an old man, he wrote many instrumental and vocal compositions most of them with folkloristic subject: Svatba Jánošíkova (Jánošík's Wedding)\* and Divný zbojník (A Strange Highwayman) which have become corner stones of the new Slovak tradition of musical composition.

The second to return was Frico Kafenda. His way home was full of adventure. He came as a Russian "legionaire". His undaunted courage his great art of a pianist, his great pedagogical experience, his knowledge of the world and its ways, stood him in good stead when he became director of the Slovak conservatory in Bratislava. This institution and its good organization are the result of his consciencious work there. Frico Kafenda gave up his work of a composer and devoted his life entirely to educating young Slovak musicians.

Having spoken about all the people who contributed to building up Slovak musical life let us at last, but by no means

<sup>\*</sup> Jánošík is Slovak Robin Hood — a historical personage about whom many legends are told and many folk ballads sung.

least mention the name of Vitezslav Novák. He is the dearest link between the two peoples the Czechs and the Slovaks. He came about fifty years ago to discover Slovakia and Slovakia made him "discover" himself. His innermost personality is closely related to the most beautiful sides of the Slovak soul. He passionately feels their sorrows, he passionately and intensively enjoys their joys. He is inspired by the monumental beauty of the Slovak mountains, Slovak folk music, its rhythm, and its elemental inspiration became his own property. He does homage to his great love of this contry by many of his works and by a wonderful collection of Slovak folk-song most carefully chosen and most masterly arranged. As his merit and importance is discussed in other chapters of this book let us noly say that he and the Czech painter Josef Mánes were the two who showed the world the artistic possibilities and the inspiring influence of Slovakia. To this country itself they opened the great sources of its own strength and so founded a tradition which, built on the outstanding musicality of the common people and their artistic creation, could outgrow the boundaries of its territory and become a worthy contribution to the World's artistic endeavour.

Vítězslav Novák has educated a whole generation of modern Slovak musicians. This modern generation whose responsibility it is to build up the free Slovakia's new musical tradition is no longer restricted by any political oppression as their fathers were. They are free to set up high ideals; and an opera, an orchestral or chamber music composition will now find excellent interpreters at home, but not only at home their work will go into the whole of Czechoslovakia—to Prague, to Brno—and father on into the wide world. A Slovak composer will now be discussed and appreciated not only by a narrow circle of his friends, but by a large

public and encouragement will come even from official places.

The responsibility of such a situation is very great and we are happy to see the new consciencious work of the younger generation educated already at home by Slovak masters. The names of the three most outstanding personalities of the Conservatory are Alexander Moyzes (b. 1906), Eugen Suchon (b. 1908), Ján Cikker (b. 1911). They all have grown up in Czechoslovakia already, and the first and the last are graduates of the Prague Conservatory, and incidentally all three of them are pupils of Vítězslav Novák. They all began composing in the way of their great teacher, but successfully found their own style. Moyzes is very manysided, a master of form and its instantaneous combinations, he has a vivid sense of sound and its beauty. Suchoň lets himself be carried away by the richess of his sentiment and a feeling for original invention, his work is a perfect union between intuition and thoughtfull premeditation. Cikker, the youngest, is in the thrall of motion and rhythm. His orchestral compositions are full of colour and they speak of the easy spontaneity with which they were written. Besides these three, there is still a number of very young musicians whose earnest endeavour is the best promise for the future. Most of them are former pupils of Vítězslav Novák. In the newly liberated republic they will be brought in contact and contest with the Czech musicians and with those of all other countries. The most promissing names are: Josef Kresánek, a graduate of the Prague Conservatory; Ondrej Očenáš, Desider Kardoš, Ladislav Holoubek, all three pupils of Alexander Moyzes. It is only to be wished that they should take all the opportunities and possibilities offered to them by the new conditions. They would be of the highest importance not only for the Slovak but for the Czechoslovak music.

## THE MOST IMPORTANT MUSICAL INSTITUTIONS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

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### Opera Houses:

The National Theatre in Prague
The Theatre of May the 5th in Prague
The Janáček Opera in Brno
The Slovak National Theatre in Bratislava
The Moravia-Silesia Theatre in Moravská Ostrava
The Municipal Theatre in Olomouc
The Provincial Theatre in Liberec
The Municipal Theatre in Plzeň
The Provincial Theatre in Opava.

## Symphonic Orchestras:

The Czech Philharmony in Prague The Film Symphonic Orchestra The Symphonic Orchestra FOK The Broadcast Symphonic Orchestra Vít Nejedlý Army Artists

#### Chamber Music:

The Czech Nonet
The Prague Wind Quintet
The Moravian Wind Quintet
Pro Arte Antiqua (a Gamboe Quintet)
Chamber Wind-Istrument Society
The Ondříček Quartet

The Prague Quartet

The National Theatre Quartet

The Czechoslovak Quartet

The Smetana Quartet

The Czech Piano Quartet

The Moravian Quartet

The Páleníček, Plocek, Sádlo Trio

The Chamber Duet

The Czech Duet

The Czech Madrigalists

#### Musical Institutions:

The State Conservatory of Music in Prague

The State Conservatory of Music in Brno

The State Conservatory in Bratislava

The Czech Academy of Arts and Science

The Slovak Academy of Arts and Science in Bratislava

Artists Union-Umělecká Beseda Prague III, Besední 3

OSA-Artists' Rights Organisation Prague XIX, A. Bráfa 20

The Syndicate of Czech Composers, Prague XIX, A. Bráfa 20

The Slovak Authors' Union, Bratislava, Kollárovo nám. 1

The Chamber of Music in Bratislava, Panenská 20

The Czech Glee Clubs Union, Prague I, Valentinská 3

The Czech Reproducting Artists' Union, Prague I, Dlouhá 5

The Contemporary Music Society, Prague XII, Ibsenova 1

The Czech Chamber Music Society, Prague VII, U Letenského sadu 4

The Sacred Music Society, Prague I, The Minorite Monastery at St James's

The Music Publishers' Union, Prague V, Vězeňská 5

The Philharmonic Society Beseda brněnská, Brno, Komenského nám. 8

Museums and Libraries:

The National Museum (Dep. of Music), Prague I, Václavské nám. 74

The Museum of Bedřich Smetana, Prague I, Novotného lávka 1 The Museum of Antonín Dvořák, Prague II, U Karlova 482

The Museum of W. A. Mozart in the Villa Bertramka, Prague XVI

The National University Library, Prague I, Klementinum

The Smetana Library, Municipal Library of the City of Prague

The Strahov Monastery Library, Prague IV, Strahovské nám.

The Czechoslovak Broadcast Musical Library, Prague XII, Stalinova 16

The Provincial Museum Musical Library, Brno, Zelný trh

### Musical Periodicals:

Rytmus (The Rhythm), Periodical of Contemporary Music, Prague II, Václavské nám.

Tempo, Periodical of Contemporary Music, Prague III, Besední 3 Věstník (News Bulletin), Periodical of the Reproductive Artists' Union, Prague I, Dlouhá 5

For further information write to:

The Ministry of Information, Department of Music, Stalinova 46, Prague XII, Czechoslovakia

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